

And then, thinking that Mini must get rid of her false fear, I had her brought out.

She stood by my chair, and looked at the Cabuliwallah and his bag. He offered her nuts and raisins, but she would not be tempted, and only clung the closer to me with all her doubts increased.

This was their first meeting.

A few mornings later, however, as I was leaving the house, I was startled to find Mini, seated on a bench near the door laughing and talking, with the great Cabuliwallah at her feet. In all her life, it appeared, my small daughter had never found so patient a listener, save her father. And already the corner of her little *sari* was stuffed with almonds and raisins, the gift of her visitor.

"Why did you give her those?" I said, and taking out an eight-anna piece I handed it to him. The man accepted the money without demur, and put it into his pocket.

Alas on my return an hour later, I found the unfortunate coin had made twice its own worth of trouble! For the Cabuliwallah had given it to Mini; and her mother catching sight of the bright round object, had pounced on the child with "Where did you get that eight-anna piece?"

"The Cabuliwallah gave it me," said Mini cheerfully.

"The Cabuliwallah gave it you?" cried her mother greatly shocked. "Mini! how could you take it from him?"

I entered at the moment, and saving her from impending disaster proceeded to make my own inquiries.

Hang on, Nicer. Advanced.

It was not the first or the second time, I found, that the two had met. The Cabuliwallah had overcome the child's first terror by a judicious bribe of nuts and almonds, and the two were now great friends.

They had many quaint jokes, which amused them greatly. Mini would seat herself before him, look down on his gigantic frame in all her tiny dignity, and with her face rippling with laughter would begin: "O Cabuliwallah! Cabuliwallah! what have you got in your bag?"

And he would reply, in the nasal accents of the mountaineer: "An elephant!" Not much cause for merriment, perhaps; but how they both enjoyed the fun! And for me, this child's talk with a grown-up man had always in it something strangely fascinating.

Then the Cabuliwallah, not to be behindhand, would take his turn: "Well, little one, and when are you going to your father-in-law's house?"

Now nearly every small Bengali maiden has heard long ago about her father-in-law's house; but we were a little new-fangled, and had kept these things from our child, so that Mini at this question must have been a trifle bewildered. But she would not show it, and with ready tact replied: "Are you going there?"

Amongst men of the Cabuliwallah's class, however, it is well-known that the words *father-in-law's house* have a double meaning. It is a euphemism for jail, the place where we are well cared for, at no expense to ourselves. In this sense would the sturdy pedlar take the daughter's question. "Ah," he would say, shaking his

that they are either thieves, or drunkards, or snakes, or tigers, or malaria, or cockroaches, or caterpillars. Even after all these years of experience, she is not able to overcome her terror. So she was full of doubts about the Cabuliwallah, and used to beg me to keep a watchful eye on him.

If I tried to laugh her fear gently away, she would turn round seriously, and ask me solemn questions:—

Were children ever kidnapped?

Was it not true that there was slavery in Cabul?

Was it so very absurd that this big man should be able to carry off a tiny child?

I urged that, though not impossible, it was very improbable. But this was not enough, and her dread persisted. But as it was a very vague dread, it did not seem right to forbid the man the house, and the intimacy went on unchecked.

Once a year in the middle of January Rahman, the Cabuliwallah, used to return to his own country, and as the time approached he would be very busy, going from house to house collecting his debts. This year, however, he could always find time to come and see Mini. It might have seemed to a stranger that there was some conspiracy between the two, for when he could not come in the morning, he would appear in the evening.

Even to me it was a little startling now and then, suddenly to surprise this tall, loose-garmented man laden with his bags, in the corner of a dark room: but when in evening, with her "O Cabuliwallah! Cabuli-

house. In the courtyard there was the canopy to be hung on its bamboo poles; there were chandeliers with ten tinkling sound to be hung in each room and candles. There was endless hurry and excitement. I was sitting in my study, looking through the accounts, when some one entered, saluting respectfully, and stood before me. It was Rahman the Cabuliwallah. At first I did not recognise him. He carried no bag, his long hair was cut short and his old vigour seemed to have gone. But he smiled and I knew him again.

"When did you come, Rahman?" I asked him.
 "Last evening," he said, "I was released from jail."
 The words struck harshly upon my ears. I had never before talked with one who had wounded his fellow-man, and my heart shrank within itself when I realised this; and I felt that the day would have been better-omened had he not appeared.

"There are ceremonies going on," I said, "and I am busy. Perhaps you could come another day."

He immediately turned to go, but as he reached the door he hesitated and said, "May I not see the little girl for a moment?" It was his belief that Mini was still the same. He had pictured her running to him as she used to do, calling "O Cabuliwallah! Cabuliwallah!" He had imagined too that they would laugh and talk together just as of old. Indeed, in memory of former days he had brought, carefully wrapped up in paper, a few almonds and raisins and grapes, obtained somehow or other from a countryman for what little money he had, had gone

I repeated: "There is a ceremony in the house, and you will not be able to see any one to-day."

The man's face fell. He looked wistfully at me for a moment, then said "Good morning," and went out.

I felt a little sorry, and would have called him back, but I found he was returning of his own accord. He came close up to me and held out his offerings with the words: "I have brought these few things, sir, for the little one. Will you give them to her?"

I took them and was going to pay him, but he caught my hand and said: "You are very kind, sir! Keep me in your memory. Do not offer me money!—You have a little girl: I too have one like her in my own home. I think of her, and bring this fruit to your child—not to make a profit for myself."

Saying this, he put his hand inside his big loose robe, and brought out a small and dirty piece of paper. Unfolding it with great care, he smoothed it out with both hands on my table. It bore the impression of a little hand. Not a photograph. Not a drawing. Merely the impression of an ink-smeared hand laid flat on the paper. This touch of the hand of his own little daughter he had carried always next his heart, as he had come year after year to Calcutta to sell his wares in

came to my eyes. I forgot that he was a little fruit-seller, while I was—. But no, what more than he? He also was a father.

A impression of the hand of his little Pārvati

country, and may the happiness of your meeting bring good fortune to my child!"

Having made this present, I had to curtail some of the festivities. I could not have the electric lights I had intended, nor the military band, and the ladies of the house were despondent about it. But to me the wedding feast was all the brighter for the thought that in a distant land a long-lost father had met again his only child.

WORDS TO BE STUDIED

precarious From the Latin word 'precari,' to pray. Compare *deprecate, imprecation*, 'precarious' means, therefore, held by entreaty, and thus insecure.

impending. From the Latin 'pendere,' to hang. Compare *depend, expend, expensive, pendant, suspend, interdependence, independent.*

judicious. From the root 'jus,' 'jud,' meaning law, right. Compare *judge, judicial, judgment, just, prejudice, adjustment, adjudicate*

euphemism. From the Greek 'pbeme,' meaning speech. Compare *blasphemy.*

transported. From the Latin 'portare,' to carry. Compare *porter, import, export, deport, support, deportation.*

intervene. From the Latin 'venire,' to come. Compare *convenient, convene, supervene, prevent.*

conclusion From the Latin 'claudere,' to close, shut. Compare *include, preclude, exclude, exclusive, exclusion.*

exclamation From the Latin 'clamare,' to cry out. Compare *clamour, proclaim, proclamation, clamorous, disclaim, declaim.*

separation. From the Latin 'se,' apart, and 'parare,' to make ready. Compare *prepare, preparation, compare, comparison, comparative.*

in her distant mountain home reminded me of my own little Mini.

I sent for Mini immediately from the inner apartment. Many difficulties were raised, but I swept them aside. Clad in the red silk of her wedding-day, with the sandal paste on her forehead, and adorned as a young bride, Mini came, and stood modestly before me.

The Cabuliwallah seemed amazed at the apparition. He could not revive their old friendship. At last he smiled and said, 'Little one, are you going to your father-in-law's house?'

But Mini now understood the meaning of the word father-in-law, and she could not answer him as of old. She blushed at the question, and stood before him with her bride-like face bowed down.

I remembered the day when the Cabuliwallah and my Mini had first met, and I felt sad. When she had gone, Rahman sighed deeply, and sat down on the floor. The idea had suddenly come to him that his daughter must have grown up, while he had been away so long, and that he would have to make friends anew with her also. Assuredly he would not find her as she was when he left her. And besides, what might not have happened to her in those eight years?

The marriage-pipes sounded and the mild autumn sunlight streamed round us. But Rahman sat in the little Calcutta lane, and saw before him the barren mountains of Afghanistan.

I took out a currency-note, gave it to him, and said, 'Go back to your daughter, Rahman, in your own

country, and may the happiness of your meeting bring good fortune to my child!"

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heard the order and made it a point of honour to stick on. But, like those who attempt earthly fame in other matters, he overlooked the fact that there was peril in it.

The boys began to heave at the log with all their might, calling out, "One, two, three, go!" At the word 'go' the log went, and with it went Mākhān's philosophy, glory and all.

The other boys shouted themselves hoarse with delight. But Phatik was a little frightened. He knew what was coming. And he was not mistaken, for Mākhān rose from Mother Earth blind as Fate and screaming like the Furies. He rushed at Phatik, scratched his face, beat him and kicked him, and then went crying home. The first act of the drama was over.

Phatik wiped his face, and sitting down on the edge of a sunken barge by the river bank, began to nibble a piece of grass. A boat came up to the landing and a middle-aged man, with grey hair and dark moustache, stepped on shore. He saw the boy sitting there doing nothing and asked him where the Chakravartī lived. Phatik went on nibbling the grass and said "Over there;" but it was quite impossible to tell where he pointed. The stranger asked him again. He swung his legs to and fro on the side of the barge and said "Go and find out," and continued to nibble the grass.

But, at that moment a servant came down from the house and told Phatik that his mother wanted him. Phatik refused to move. But on this occasion the servant was the master. He roughly took Phatik up and carried him, kicking and struggling in impotent rage.

When Phatik entered the house, his mother saw him and called out angrily: "So you have been hitting Mākhan again?"

Phatik answered indignantly: "No, I haven't! Who told you that I had?"

His mother shouted: "Don't tell lies! You have."

Phatik said sullenly: "I tell you, I haven't. You ask Mākhan!" But Mākhan thought it best to stick to his previous statement. He said: "Yes, mother, Phatik did hit me."

Phatik's patience was already exhausted. He could not bear this injustice. He rushed at Mākhan and rained on him a shower of blows. "Take that," he cried, "and that, and that, for telling lies."

His mother took Mākhan's side in a moment, and pulled Phatik away, returning his blows with equal vigour. When Phatik pushed her aside, she shouted out: "What! you little villain! Would you hit your own mother?"

It was just at this critical moment that the grey-haired stranger arrived. He asked what had occurred. Phatik looked sheepish and ashamed.

But when his mother stepped back and looked at the stranger, her anger was changed to surprise. For she recognized her brother and cried: "Why, Dada! Where have you come from?"

As she said these words, she bowed to the ground and touched his feet. Her brother Bishamher had gone away soon after she had married, and had started business in Bombay. She herself had lost her husband while

no was there. Bishamber had now come back to Calcutta and had at once made enquiries concerning his sister. As soon as he found out where she was, he had hastened to see her.

The next few days were full of rejoicing. The brother asked how the two boys were being brought up. He was told by his sister that Phatik was a perpetual nuisance. He was lazy, disobedient, and wild. But Makhhan was as good as gold, as quiet as a lamb, and very fond of reading. Bishamber kindly offered to take Phatik off his sister's hands and educate him with his own children in Calcutta. The widowed mother readily agreed. When his uncle asked Phatik if he would like to go to Calcutta with him, his joy knew no bounds and he said, "Oh, yes, uncle," in a way that made it quite clear that he meant it.

It was an immense relief to the mother to get rid of Phatik. She had a prejudice against the boy, and no love was lost between the two brothers. She was in daily fear that he would some day either drown Makhhan in the river, or break his head in a fight, or urge him on into some danger. At the same time she was a little distressed to see Phatik's extreme eagerness to leave his home.

Phatik, as soon as all was settled, kept asking his uncle every minute when they were to start. He was on pins all day long, with excitement and lay awake most of the night. He bequeathed to Makhhan, in perpetuity, his fishing-rod, his big kite, and his marbles. Indeed, at this time of departure his generosity towards Makhhan was unbounded.

When they reached Calcutta, Phatik met his aunt the first time. She was by no means pleased with this necessary addition to her family. She found her own two boys quite enough to manage without taking any one else. And to bring a village lad of fourteen into their midst was terribly upsetting. Bishamber should really have thought twice before committing such an improvisation.

In this world there is no worse nuisance than a boy of the age of fourteen. He is neither ornamental nor useful. It is impossible to shower affection on him as on a smaller boy; and he is always getting in the way. If he talks with a childish lisp he is called a baby, and if in a grown-up way he is called impertinent. In fact, talk of any kind from him is resented. Then he is at the most attractive, growing age. He grows out of his clothes with indecent haste, his voice grows hoarse and breaks and ravers; his face grows suddenly angular and unsightly. It is easy to excuse the shortcomings of early childhood, but it is hard to tolerate even unavoidable lapses in a boy of fourteen. He becomes painfully self-conscious, and when he talks with elderly people he is either unduly forward, or else so unduly shy that he appears ashamed of his own existence.

Yet, it is at this age that in his heart of hearts, a young lad most craves recognition and love; and he becomes the devoted slave of any one who shows him consideration. But none dare openly love him, for that would be regarded as undue indulgence and therefore bad for

So, what with scolding and chiding, he becomes much like a stray dog that has lost its master.

His own home is the only Paradise that a boy of ten can know. To live in a strange house with strange people is little short of torture; while it is the height of bliss to receive the kind looks of women and to suffer their slight.

It was anguish to Phatik to be an unwelcome guest in his aunt's house, constantly despised and slighted by an elderly woman. If she ever asked him to do anything for her, he would be so overjoyed that his joy would be exaggerated, and then she would tell him not to be so proud, but to get on with his lessons.

This constant neglect gave Phatik a feeling of almost total oppression. He wanted to go out into the open country and fill his lungs with fresh air. But there was no open country to go to. Surrounded on all sides by other houses and walls, he would dream night after night of his village home and long to be back there. He remembered the glorious meadow where he used to fly kites all day long, the broad river-banks where he would wander the livelong day singing and shouting for joy; the cool brook where he could dive and swim whenever he liked. He thought of the band of boy companions over whom he was despot and, above all, thoughts of even his tyrant mother of his, who had such a prejudice against him, filled his mind day and night. (A kind of physical longing like that of animals, a longing to be in the presence of the loved one, an inexpressible wistfulness during absence, a silent cry of the inmost heart for the mother, like

the lowing of a calf in the twilight,—this love, which was almost an animal instinct, stirred the heart of this shy, nervous, thin, uncouth and ugly boy. No one could understand it, but it preyed upon his mind continually.

There was no more backward boy in the whole school than Phatik. He gaped and remained silent when the teacher asked him a question, and like an overladen ass patiently suffered the many thrashings that were meted out to him. When other boys were out at play, he stood wistfully by the window and gazed at the roofs of the distant houses. And if by chance he espied children playing on the open terrace of a roof, his heart would ache with longing.

One day he summoned up all his courage and asked his uncle: "Uncle, when can I go home?"

His uncle answered: "Wait till the holidays come."

But the holidays would not come till October and there was still a long time to wait.

One day Phatik lost his lesson book. Even with the help of hooks he had found it very difficult to prepare his lesson. But, now, it became impossible. Day after day the teacher caned him unmercifully. He became so abjectly miserable that even his cousins were ashamed to own him. They began to jeer and insult him more than even the other boys did. At last he went to his aunt and told her that he had lost his book.

With an expression of the greatest contempt she burst out: "You great, clumsy, country lout! How can I afford to buy you now books five times a month, when I have my own family to look after?"

That night, on his way back from school, Phatik had a bad headache and a shivering-fit. He felt that he was going to have an attack of malaria. His one great fear was that he might be an nuisance to his aunt.

The next morning Phatik was nowhere to be seen. Search in the neighbourhood proved futile. The rain had been pouring in torrents all night, and those who went out to look for the boy were drenched to the skin. At last Bishamber asked the police to help him.

At nightfall a police van stopped at the door of the house. It was still raining and the streets were flooded. Two constables carried Phatik out in their arms and placed him before Bishamber. He was wet through from head to foot, covered with mud, while his face and eyes were flushed with fever and his limbs were trembling. Bishamber carried him in his arms and took him inside the house. When his wife saw him she exclaimed,

"What a heap of trouble this boy has given us! Hadn't you better send him home?"

Phatik heard her words and sobbed aloud. "Uncle, I was just going home, but they dragged me back again."

The fever rapidly increased, and throughout the night the boy was delirious. Bishamber brought in a doctor. Phatik opened his eyes, and looking up to the ceiling said vacantly "Uncle, have the holidays come yet?"

Bishamber wiped the tears from his eyes and took Phatik's thin burning hands in his own and sat by his side through the night. Again the boy began to mutter, till at last his voice rose almost to a shriek. "Mother!"

he cried, "don't beat me like that. Mother! I am telling the truth!"

Mother! I am

The next day Phatik for a short time became conscious. His eyes wandered round the room, as if he expected some one to come. At last, with an air of disappointment, his head sank back on the pillow. With a deep sigh he turned his face to the wall.

Bishamber read his thoughts, and bending down his head whispered: "Phatik, I have sent for your mother."

The day dragged on. The doctor said in a troubled voice that the boy's condition was very critical.

Phatik began to cry out: "By the mark—three fathoms. By the mark—four fathoms. By the mark—Many times had he heard the sailors on the river-steamers calling out the mark on the leadline. Now he was himself plumbing an unfathomable sea.

Later in the day Phatik's mother burst into the room like a whirlwind, and rocking herself to and fro from side to side began to moan and cry.

Bishamber tried to calm her, but she flung herself on the bed, and cried: "Phatik, my darling, my darling."

Phatik stopped his restless movements for a moment. His hands ceased beating up and down. He said: "Mamma?"

The mother cried again: "Phatik, my darling, my darling."

Very slowly Phatik's eyes wandered, but he could no longer see the people round his bed. At last he murmured: "Mamma, the holidays have come."

WORDS TO BE STUDIED.

- proposal** From the Latin word 'ponere,' to place Compare *position, post, depose, impose, component, composition, repose.*
- unanimously.** From the Latin 'unus,' one, and 'animus,' mind Compare *magnanimous, pusillanimous*
- philosopher** From the Greek 'philos, a friend, and 'sophia, wisdom Compare *philology, philanthropy, theosophy*
- moustache** A French word which has found its home in English French is frequently giving to English new words. Compare, in this story, *mancuvre, discomfit, mischief.*
- juncture** From the Latin 'jungere,' to join Compare *junction conjunction, subjunctive, adjunct*
- unattractive** From the negative 'un,' meaning 'not,' and the Latin word 'trahere,' to draw Compare *traction, tractor, attract, extract, subtract*
- atmosphere** From the Greek, word 'atmos,' the air, and 'sphaera,' a globe Compare *sphere, hemisphere, photo-sphere.*
- wistfulness** Probably from the English word 'wish,' wishfulness. Some, however, regard it as coming from an old word 'whist' or 'wist' meaning silent. The vernacular word 'udas' has the same meaning.
- abjectly** From the Latin word 'jacere,' to throw Compare *ad jacite, subject, object, project, inject, reject*
- neighbourhood** From a Saxon word meaning near, nigh; 'hood' or 'head' is a common addition to Saxon words denoting the quality or character Compare *knighthood, manhood, boyhood womanhood*
- holidays** This word is made up of two words, 'holy' and 'days' The religious days of the Church were those on which no one worked, and thus they got the meaning of holidays as opposed to working days.

III.—ONCE THERE WAS A KING

"Once upon a time there was a king"

When we were children there was no need to know who the king in the fairy story was. It didn't matter whether he was called Siladitya or Salivahn, whether he lived at Kashi or Kanuu. The thing that made a seven-year-old boy's heart go thump, thump with delight was this one sovereign truth, this reality of all realities: "Once there was a king."

But the readers of this modern age are far more exact and exacting. When they hear such an opening to a story, they are at once critical and suspicious. They apply the searchlight of science to its legendary haze and ask: "Which king?"

The story-tellers also have become more precise. They are no longer content with the old indefinite, "There was a king," but assume instead a look of profound learning and begin: "Once there was a king named Ajata-satru"

The modern reader's curiosity, however, is not so easily satisfied. He blinks at the author through his scientific spectacles and asks again: "Which Ajata-satru?"

When we were young, we understood all sweet things; and we could detect the sweets of a fairy story by an unerring science of our own. We never cared for such useless things as knowledge. We only cared for truth. And our unsophisticated little hearts knew well where

the Crystal Palace of Truth lay and how to reach it. But to-day we are expected to write pages of facts, while the truth is simply this—

"There was a king" (2)

I remember vividly that evening in Calcutta when the fairy story began. It had been raining all day long. The whole city was flooded. In our lane the water was knee-deep. I had a straining hope, which was almost a certainty, that my tutor would be prevented from coming that evening. I sat on the stool in the far corner of the verandah looking down the lane, and my heart beat faster and faster. Every minute I kept my eye on the rain, and when it began to abate, I prayed with all my might. "Please, God, let it keep on raining till after half-past seven." For I was quite ready to believe that the only need for rain was to protect one helpless boy one evening in a certain corner of Calcutta from the deadly clutches of his tutor.

If not in answer to my prayer, at least according to some grosser law of nature, the rain did not give over. But, alas, neither did my teacher!

Exactly to the minute, in the turn of the lane, I saw his umbrella approaching. The great bubble of hope burst in my breast, and my heart collapsed. Truly, if there is, after death, a punishment to fit the crime, then my tutor will be born again in my place, and I shall be born in my tutor's.

As soon as I saw his umbrella I ran as hard as I could to my mother's room. My mother and my grandmother were sitting opposite each other playing cards.

the light of a lamp I ran into the room, flung myself on the bed beside my mother, and said:

"Mother, my tutor has come, and I have such a bad headache. could I do without my lesson to-day?"

I hope no child will be allowed to read this story, and I sincerely trust it will not be used in text-books, or in any other way, for junior classes. For what I did was dreadfully bad, and I received no punishment whatever. On the contrary, my wicked request was granted.

Mother said to me "All right," and turning to the servant added: "Tell the tutor that he can go back home."

It was quite plain that she did not think my illness very serious, for she went on with her game and took no further notice. And I, burying my head in the pillow, laughed to my heart's content. We understood one another, perfectly, my mother and I.

But every one must know how hard it is for a boy seven years old to keep up the illusion of illness for long. After about a minute I caught hold of Grandmother and said: "Grannie, do tell me a story."

I had to ask many times. Grannie and Mother went on playing cards and took no notice. At last Mother said to me: "Child, don't bother. Wait till we've finished our game." But I persisted: "Grannie, do tell me a story." I told Mother she could finish her game to-morrow, but she must let Grannie tell me a story then and then.

At last, Mother threw down the cards and said: "You had better do what he wants. I can't manage

him." Perhaps she remembered that she would have no tiresome tutor the following day, while I should have to be back at those stupid lessons.

As soon as Mother had given way, I rushed at Grannie. I seized her hand, and, dancing with delight, dragged her inside my mosquito curtain on to the bed. I clutched the bolster with both hands in my excitement, and jumped up and down with joy, and when at last I had become a little quieter said "Now, Grannie, let's have the story!"

Grannie went on "And the king had a queen."

That was good to begin with. He had only one!

It is usual for kings in fairy stories to be extravagant in the number of queens they have. And whenever we hear that there are two queens our hearts begin to sink. One of them is sure to be unhappy. But in Grannie's story there was no danger of that. He had only one queen.

The next detail of Grannie's story was that the king had no son. At the age of seven I did not think one need bother if a man had no son. He might only have been in the way.

Nor was I greatly excited when I heard that the king had gone into the forest to practise austerities in order to obtain a son. There was only one thing that would have made me go into the forest, and that was to get away from my tutor!

But the king had left behind with his queen a little girl, who grew up into a beautiful princess.

Twelve years passed away, and the king went on

practising austerities, and never thought of his beautiful daughter. The princess had reached the full bloom of her youth. The age of marriage had passed, but the king had not returned. And the queen pined away with grief and cried: "Is my golden daughter destined to die unmarried? Ah me, what a fate is mine!"

Then the queen sent men to the king entreating him to come back if only for a single night, and to eat one meal in the palace. And the king consented.

With the greatest care, the queen cooked with her own hand, sixty-four dishes. She made a seat for him of sandal-wood and arranged the food in plates of gold and cups of silver. The princess stood behind his seat with the peacock-tail fan in her hand. After his twelve years' absence, the king entered the house, and the princess waving the fan, lighted up all the room with her beauty. The king looked in his daughter's face and forgot even to eat.

At last he asked his queen: "Pray, who is this girl whose beauty shines as the golden image of the goddess? Whose daughter is she?"

The queen beat her forehead and cried: "Ah, how evil is my fate! Do you not recognise your own daughter?"

For some time the king remained in silent amazement, but at last he exclaimed: "My tiny daughter has grown to be a woman."

"How could it be otherwise?" the queen asked with a sigh. "Do you not know that twelve years have passed?"

"But why did you not give her in marriage?" asked the king.

"You were away," the queen replied. "And how could I find her a suitable husband?"

At this the king strangely excited, vowed that the first man he saw the following day when he went out of the palace should marry her.

But the princess merely went on waving her fan of peacock feathers, and the king finished his meal.

The next morning, as the king went out of his palace, he saw the son of a Bedouin gathering sticks in the forest outside the palace gates. He was about seven or eight years old.

The king said, "I will marry my daughter to him."

"Who can interfere with a king's command?" At once the boy was called, and the marriage garlands were exchanged between him and the princess.

At this point I came up close to my wise Grannie and asked her eagerly, "What then?"

In the bottom of my heart there was a devout wish that I might be that fortunate seven-year-old wood-gatherer. The night resounded with the patter of rain. The earthen lamp by my bedside was burning low. My grand-mother's voice droned on as she told the story. And all these things served to create in a corner of my credulous heart the belief that I had been gathering sticks to the dawn of some indefinite time in the kingdom of some unknown king, and that in a moment garlands had been exchanged between me and the princess, beautiful as the Goddess of Grace. She had a gold band on

black hair and gold earrings in her ears. She wore a necklace and bracelets of gold, and a golden waist-chain round her waist, and a pair of golden anklets tinkled with the movement of her feet.

If my grand-mother had been an author, how many explanations would she not have had to offer of this little

First of all, every one would ask why the king married twelve years in the forest? And then, why did the king's daughter remain unmarried all that

? Such a delay would be regarded as absurd. Even if my Grannie could have got so far without meddling with her critics still there would have been a great hue and cry about the marriage itself. In the first

place, it never happened. And in the second, how could it be a marriage between a princess of the Warrior caste and a boy of the priestly Brahman Caste? Her readers would have imagined at once that the writer was reaching against our social customs in an indirect and unfair way. And they would write letters to the papers.

So I pray with all my heart that my grand-mother may be born a grand-mother again, and not through some cursed fate be born again in the person of her luckless grandson.

With a throb of joy and delight, I asked Grannie "What then?"

Grannie went on. Then the princess took her little husband away, and built for him a large palace with wings, and cherished him there. She jumped up and down in my bed, clutched me tighter than ever and said: "What then?"

Giramine continued. The little boy went to school and learnt many lessons from his teachers, and as he grew up the boys in his class began to ask him, "Who is that beautiful lady living with you in the palace with the seven wings?"

The Brahman's son was eager to know who she was, but he could only remember how one day he had been gathering sticks and how a great disturbance had arisen. But all this was so long ago that he had no clear recollection of it.

In this way, four or five years passed. His companions were always asking him, "Who is that beautiful lady in the palace with the seven wings?" And the Brahman's son would come back from school and sadly say to the prince, "My school companions always ask me who that beautiful lady is in the palace with the seven wings, and I cannot answer them. Tell me, oh, tell me, who you are."

The princess said, "Let it pass untold to-day. I will tell you some other day." And every day the Brahman's son would ask, "Who are you?" and the princess would reply, "Let it pass untold to-day. I will tell you some other day." And so four or five years more went by.

At last the Brahman's son became very impatient and said, "If you do not tell me to-day who you are, beautiful lady, I will leave this palace with the seven wings." Then the princess said, "I will certainly tell you to-morrow."

Next day the Brahman's son, as soon as he came home

from school, said "Now, tell me who you are." The princess said "To-night after supper I will tell you when you are in bed."

The Brahman's son agreed. And he began to count the hours in expectation of the night. And the princess spread white flowers over the golden bed, filled a golden lamp with fragrant oil and lighted it, adorned her hair, and dressing herself in a beautiful robe of blue, began to count the hours in expectation of the night.

That evening her husband, the Brahman's son, was almost too excited to eat, but when he had finished his supper, he went to the golden bed in the bedchamber strewn with flowers, and said to himself: "To-night I shall surely know who this beautiful lady is in the palace with the seven wings."

The princess ate what was left over from her husband's supper, and slowly entered the bed-chamber. She had to reveal that very night the identity of the beautiful lady that lived in the palace with the seven wings. And as she went up to the bed to tell him she found a serpent had crept out of the flowers and had bitten the Brahman's son. Her boy-husband was lying on the bed of flowers, his face pale in death পালিত. My heart suddenly ceased to throb, and I asked with a voice choking with tears: "What then?"

Grannie said: "Then . . ."

But what is the use of going on any further with the story? It would only lead to what was more and more impossible. The boy of seven did not know that even though there were some "What then?" after

death, not even the grand-mother of a grand-mother could tell us all about it

But the child's faith never admits defeat, and it would snatch at the mantle of Death himself in an attempt to prevent his approach. It would be outrageous for him to think that such a story told on an evening when his teacher was away could come so suddenly to a stop. Therefore the grand-mother has to call back her fairytale from the ever-shut chamber of the great End. And she does it so simply, ~~completely~~ by floating the dead body down the river on a banian stem, and having some incantations read by a magician. But on that rainy night and in the dim light of a lamp, death in the mind of the boy, loses all its horror, and seems nothing more than the deep slumber of a single night. When the story ends the tired eyelids are weighed down with sleep. Thus it is that we send the little body of the child floating on the back of sleep over the still water of time, and then in the morning read a few verses of incantation to restore him to the world of life and light.

WORDS TO BE STUDIED

sovereign This word is taken directly from the French language. It is connected with the Latin 'supremus'

blinks Many English words are made up from the supposed sound or motion to be represented. Compare *to splash, to plump, to quack, to throb, to crush.*

suspicious From the Latin word 'spicere,' to look. Compare *auspicious, respect, inspect, aspect*

unsophisticated This word comes from the Greek 'sophistes,' meaning a sophist, that is to say, one who makes a pie-

STORIES FROM TAGOR.

tence of being wise Unsophisticated means one who makes no pretence to be learned.

rella. This word has come into English from the Italian language. 'Umbra' in Latin means 'shade' and Ombrella in Italian means 'little shade'

avagant. From the Latin word 'vagari,' to wander, The word means 'wandering outside' and so 'going beyond bounds.' Compare *vagrant, vagabond, vaguer.*

anation. From the Latin 'planus,' meaning plain Compare *explanatory, explain, plain, plane*

ntation. From the Latin 'cantare,' to chant, something chanted over a person

ician From the Greek 'magus,' an astrologer. Compare *magic, the Magi, magical.*

IV — THE CHILD'S RETURN.

I.

Raicharan was twelve years old when he came as a servant to his master's house. He belonged to the same caste as his master and was given his master's little son to nurse. As time went on the boy left Raicharan's arms to go to school. From school he went to college, and after college he entered the judicial service. Until the time of the boy's marriage, Raicharan was his sole attendant.

But when a mistress came into the house, Raicharan found that he had two masters instead of one. All his former influence passed to the new mistress. This was compensated for by a fresh arrival. Anukul had a son born to him and Raicharan by his unsparing attentions soon obtained complete hold over the child. He would toss him up in his arms, call to him in absurd baby language, put his face close to the baby's and withdraw it again with a laugh.

Presently the child was able to crawl and venture outside the house. When Raicharan went to catch him he would scream with mischievous laughter and try to evade him. Raicharan was amazed at the profound skill and exact judgment the baby showed when pursued. He would say to his mistress with a look of awe and mystery

"Your son will be a judge some day."

New wonders came in their turn. It was to Raicharan an epoch in human history when the baby began

to toddle. When he called his father Ba-ba and his mother Ma-ma and Raicharan Chun-na, then Raicharan's joy was boundless. He wanted to let the whole world know.

After a while Raicharan was asked to show his ingenuity in other ways. He had, for instance, to play the part of a horse, holding the reins between his teeth and prancing with his feet. He had also to wrestle with his little charge, and if he could not, by a wrestler's trick, fall on his back defeated at the end, a great outcry was certain.

About this time Anukul was transferred to a district on the banks of the Padma. On his way through Calcutta he bought his son a little go-cart, and at the same time a yellow satin waist coat, a gold-laced cap, and gold bracelets and anklets. Raicharan loved to take this finery out and put it on his little charge, whenever they went for a walk, and this he did with great pride and ceremony.

Then came the rainy season and day after day the rain poured down. The hungry river, like an enormous serpent, swallowed terraces, villages, and cornfields, covering with its flood the tall grasses and wild casuarinas on the sandbanks. From time to time there was a deep thud as the river-banks crumbled. The unceasing roar of the main current could be heard from far away. Masses of foam, carried swiftly past, proved to the eye the swiftness of the stream.

One afternoon the rain stopped. It was cloudy, but cool and bright. Raicharan's little despot did not want

to stay indoors on such a fine afternoon. His lordship climbed into the go-cart. Raicharan, between the shafts, dragged him slowly along till he reached the rice-fields on the banks of the river. There was no one in the fields and no boat on the stream. Across the water, on the farther side, the clouds were rifted in the west. The great ceremonial of the setting sun was revealed in all glowing splendour. In the midst of that stillness the old suddenly pointed in front of him and cried: "han-na' Pitty fow"

On a mud-flat close by stood a large *Kadamba* tree full of flowers. My lord the baby looked at it with greedy eyes, and Raicharan knew immediately what he wanted. Only a short time before he had made, out of the flower-bells of this tree a small go-cart, and the child had been happily dragging it about by a string, that for the whole day Raicharan was not asked to put on the reins at all. He was promoted from being a horse to being a groom.

But Raicharan had no wish that evening to go splashing knee-deep through the mud to reach the flowers. So he quickly pointed in the opposite direction, and cried

"Look baby look! Look at the bird!" And with all sorts of curious noises he pushed the go-cart rapidly away from the tree.

But a child destined to be a judge, cannot be put off so easily. And besides, there was at the time nothing to attract his eyes. And you cannot keep up for ever the pretence of an imaginary bird.

The little Master's mind was made up, and Raicharan

Anukul tried to reason his wife out of this wholly unjust suspicion: "Why on earth," he said, "should he commit such a crime as that?"

The mother only replied: "The baby was wearing gold ornaments. Who knows?"

It was impossible to reason with her after that.

2.

Raicharan went back to the village of his birth. He had no son, and there was no hope that a child would now be born to him. But it came about before the end of a year that his wife gave birth to a son and died.

An overwhelming resentment at first grew up in Raicharan's heart at the sight of this new baby. At the back of his mind was an indignant suspicion that it had come as a usurper in place of the little Master. He also thought that it would be a grave offence to be happy with a son of his own after what had happened to his master's little child. Indeed, if it had not been for a widowed sister, who mothered the new baby, it would not have lived long.

But gradually a change came over Raicharan's mind. A wonderful thing happened. This new baby in turn began to crawl about, and venture outside the house on mischief bent. It also showed an amusing cleverness in making its escape to safety. Its voice, its laughter and tears, its gestures, were those of the little Master. Sometimes, when Raicharan listened to its crying, his heart suddenly began thumping wildly against his ribs, and it

him that his former little Master was crying

newborn in the unknown land of death because he had lost his Chan-ma.

Phauluc (for that was the name Ratcharan's sister gave to the new baby) soon began to talk. It learnt to say Ba-ha and Ma-ma with a baby accent. When Ratcharan heard these lamhar sounds the mystery suddenly came clear. The little Master could not cast off the spell of his Chan-ma and therefore he had been reborn in his house.

The three arguments in favour of this were, to Ratcharan, altogether beyond dispute.

The new baby was born soon after his little master's death.

His wife could never have accumulated such merit as to give birth to a son in middle age.

The new baby walked with toddling steps and called out Ba-ha and Ma-ma. There was no sign lacking. He was certainly the future pudge.

Then suddenly Ratcharan remembered that terrible accusation of the mother. "Ah," he said to himself in amazement, "the mother's heart was right. She knew I had stolen her child."

When once he had come to this conclusion, he was filled with remorse for his past neglect. He now gave himself over body and soul to the new baby and became its devoted attendant. He began to bring it up as if it were the son of a rich man. He bought a go-cart, a yellow satin waist coat, and a gold-embroidered cap. He melted down the ornaments of his dead wife and made gold bangles and anklets. He refused to let the little

one play with any child in the neighbourhood and became himself its sole companion day and night. As the baby grew to boyhood, he was so petted and spoilt and clad in such finery that the village children would call him "Your Lordship," and jeer at him; and older people regarded Raicharan as unaccountably crazy about the child.

At last the time came for the boy to go to school. Raicharan sold his small piece of land and went to Calcutta. There with great difficulty he found employment as a servant and sent Phaulna to school. He spared no pains to give him the best education, the best clothes, the best food. Meanwhile, he himself lived on a *mere* handful of rice and would say in secret: "Ah, my little Master, my dear little Master, you loved me so much that you came back to my house! You will never suffer from any neglect of mine."

In this way, twelve years passed away. The boy could now read and write well. He was bright, good-looking, and in perfect health. He paid a great deal of attention to his personal appearance and took great care in the parting of his hair. He was inclined to extravagance, and spent money freely in finery and enjoyment. He could never quite regard Raicharan as a father, because, though he had the affection of a father, his manner was that of a servant. A further fault was this, that Raicharan kept secret from every one the fact that he himself was the father of the child.

The students of the hostel in which Phaulna was a boarder, were greatly amused by Raicharan's country

maulers, and I am afraid that behind his father's back Phailna joined in their fun. But, in the bottom of their hearts, all the students loved the innocent and tender-hearted old man, and Phailna also was very fond of him. But as I have said before, he loved him with a kind of condescension.

As Ratcharan grew older and older, his employer was continually finding fault with him for his incompetence. He starved himself for the boy's sake, so that he wasted his body and was no longer up to his daily task. He began to forget things and became dull and stupid. But his employer expected the work of a fully capable servant and would listen to no excuses. The money that Ratcharan had brought with him from the sale of his land was now exhausted, and the boy continually grumbled about the state of his clothes and continually asked for more money.

3

At last Ratcharan made up his mind. He threw up his work as a servant, and left some money with Phailna. Before leaving, he promised Phailna that after seeing to some necessary business in his native village, he would immediately return.

He went off at once to Baraset where Anukul was magistrate. Anukul's wife was still broken down with grief for she had had no other child.

One evening Anukul was resting after a long and weary day in court. His wife was buying from a mendicant quack, at an exorbitant price, a herb which, so the

assured her, would ensure the birth of a child. At last, in the courtyard, Anukul heard a voice raised in protest, and he went out to see who was there. There he found his old friend stood Raicharan, and when he saw his old friend, Anukul's heart was softened. He asked him many questions and offered to take him back into his home.

But Raicharan only smiled faintly and said in reply: "I merely want to make obeisance to my mistress." Anukul accompanied Raicharan into the house, but his mistress did not receive him as warmly as his old master had done. Raicharan took no notice, but with his hands clasped in appeal, said, "It was not the Padma that stole your baby. It was I."

"Great God!" Anukul exclaimed. "What! Where is he?"

Raicharan replied: "He is with me. I will bring him the day after to-morrow."

It was Sunday, and so the magistrate's court was not sitting. From early morning both husband and wife were gazing expectantly along the road, waiting for Raicharan's appearance. At ten o'clock he came, leading Phailna by the hand.

Anukul's wife, without questioning his identity, took the boy on her lap and was wild with excitement, laughing, weeping, touching him, kissing his hair and his forehead, and gazing into his face with hungry, eager eyes. The boy was very good-looking and was dressed like a gentleman's son. The heart of Anukul brimmed over with a sudden gush of affection.

Nevertheless the magistrate in him asked: "Have you any proofs that he is my son?"

Raicharan said "Proof? How could there be any proof of such a deed? God alone knows that I and no one else in the world stole your boy."

When Anukul saw how eagerly his wife clung to the fox, he realised how futile it was to ask for proofs. It would be wiser to believe. And then,—where could an old man like Raicharan get such a boy? And why should his faithful servant deceive him? He could surely hope for no gain from such deceit.

Still, he could not forget his old servant's lapse from duty, so he exclaimed: "Raicharan, you must not remain any longer here."

"When shall I go, Master?" said Raicharan, in a voice choking with grief. Then with hands clasped imploringly, he added: "I am old. Who will take an old man as a servant?"

The mistress said: "Let him stay. My child will be pleased, and I forgive him."

But Anukul's magisterial conscience would not let him permit this. No, he said, "he cannot be forgiven for what he has done."

Raicharan bowed to the ground and clasped Anukul's feet. "Master, he cried, "let me stay. It was not I that did it. It was God."

Anukul's conscience was more shocked than ever when Raicharan tried to put the blame on God.

"No," he said, "I cannot allow it. I can trust you no longer. You have acted treacherously."

Rachatan rose to his feet and said: "It was not I that did it."

"Who was it then?" asked Anukul.

Rachatan replied: "It was my fate."

But no educated man could take this for an excuse and Anukul remained obdurate.

When Phahua saw that he was the wealthy magistrate's son, and not Rachatan's, he was at first angry, for he thought that he had been cheated all this time of his hathright. But seeing Rachatan in distress, he generously said to his father: "Father, forgive him. Even if you don't let him live with us, let him at least have a small monthly pension."

On hearing this, Rachatan was speechless. He looked for the last time on the face of his son. He made adieu to his old master and mistress. Then he went out and mingled with the numberless people of the world.

At the end of the month Anukul sent some money to his village. But the money came back, for no person of the name of Rachatan could be found there.

WORDS TO BE STUDIED

judicial. From the Latin word 'judex' a judge. Compare *judicious, judge, judgment, just*.

compensate. From the Latin word 'pensare,' to weigh. Compare *dispend, dispensary, compensation*. (This must not be confused with the Latin word 'pendere,' to hang. Compare *suspend, expend, depend*).

ecstasy. From two Greek words 'ex,' out, and 'stasis,' stand. *ecstasy* i.e. standing outside oneself.

- transferred** From the Latin word '*ferre*,' to carry. Compare *refer, defer, confer, proffer, infer, conference, fertile*
- crumble** To break into crumbs or little pieces.
- promoted** From the Latin word '*movire*,' to move. Compare *move, motion, motor, promotion, commotion*.
- excited** From the Latin word '*ciere*,' to set in motion. Compare *surprise, excitement, exciting, etc*
- lantern** A French word derived from the Greek '*lampein*,' to shine. Compare *magic lantern, lamp*.
- gipsy** Also spelt *pypsy*, from '*Egyptian*,' because the gipsies were supposed to come from Egypt.
- usurper.** From the Latin word '*usurpare*.' This word is made up of '*usus*, use, and '*rapere*,' to snatch. Compare *use, usual, usufruct, rapid, raft, rapture*
- magisterial** From the Latin word '*magister*,' a judge. Compare *magistrate, magistracy*
- obdurate** From the Latin word '*durus*,' hard. Compare *endure, endurance, obduracy*.

excited and cried: "No, he shan't go away." He dragged the stranger to his father.

Adharlal had just risen from his mid-day sleep and was sitting quietly on the upper verandah in his cane chair, swinging his legs. Ratikanta seated in a chair next to him was enjoying his hookah. He asked Haralal how far he had got in his reading. The young man bent his head and answered that he had passed the Matriculation Examination. Ratikanta with a stern look expressed surprise that a boy of his age should be so backward. Haralal kept silent. It was Ratikanta's special pleasure to torture his patron's dependants, whether actual or potential.

Suddenly it struck Adharlal that he would be able to employ this youth for next to nothing as a tutor for his son. He agreed, there and then, to take him at a salary of five rupees a month with board and lodging free.

3.

This time the post of tutor was occupied longer than ever before. From the very beginning of their acquaintance Haralal and his pupil became great friends. He before had Haralal been given such an opportunity of playing with the children at the houses where he was employed. Hitherto, he had never had the privilege. He had never had the privilege of playing with the children at the houses where he was employed. Hitherto, he had not suspected the hidden stores of love which lay accumulating in his heart. Venu, also, was glad to find a companion in Haralal.

lal. He was the only boy in the house. His two younger sisters were looked down upon, as unworthy of being his playmates. So his new tutor became his only companion, patiently bearing the undivided weight of the tyranny of his child friend.

4

Venu was now eleven. Haralal had passed the Intermediate Examination, and won a scholarship. He was working hard for his B.A. degree. After College lectures were over, he would take Venu out into the public park and tell him stories about the heroes from Greek History and from Victor Hugo's romances. The child in spite of his mother's attempts to keep him by her side, used to get quite impatient to run to Haralal, after school hours.

This displeased Nambala. She thought that it was a deep-laid plot of Haralal's to captivate her boy, so that he might remain indefinitely in his post as tutor. One day she talked to him from behind the jandab. "It is your duty to teach my son, for an hour or two only, in the morning and evening. But why are you always with him? The child has nearly forgotten his own parents. You must understand that a man of your position is no fit companion for a boy of this house."

Haralal's voice choked a little as he answered that in future he would be Venu's teacher merely and would keep away from him at other times.

It was Haralal's usual practice to begin his College study long before dawn. The child would come to him

as soon as he had washed. There was a small plot in the garden where they used to feed the fish with rice. Venu was also engaged in building a small garden-house at the corner of the garden, with high gates and hedges and gravel paths. When the rains came too hot they used to go back into the house, but Venu would have his morning lesson from Haralal.

On the day in question Venu had risen earlier than usual, because he wished to hear the end of the story which Haralal had begun the evening before. But he could not find his teacher. When asked about him by a servant at the door said that he had gone out. At that time Venu sat unnaturally quiet. He never even asked Haralal why he had gone out, but went on mechanically with his lessons. When the child was with his mother at breakfast, she asked him what had happened to make him so gloomy, and why he could not eat. Venu did not answer. After his meal his mother carried him and questioned him repeatedly. Venu burst out crying and said,—"Master Mashai." His mother asked him,—"What about Master Mashai?" But Venu found it difficult to say in what way his teacher had offended

So his mother asked him: "Has your Master Mashai been saying anything to you against me?"

But Venu could not understand her question and went away.

5.

Soon after this, there was a theft in Adhar Babu's house. The police were called in to investigate. Later Haralal's trunks were searched. Ratikanta said with

meaning. "The man who steals anything, does not hide his ill-gotten gains in his own box."

Adharlal called his son's tutor and said to him: "It will not be convenient for me to keep you in this house. From to-day you will have to live elsewhere, and only come in to teach my son at the usual time."

At this, Ratikanta drawing at his bookah remarked sagely. "That is a good proposal,—good for both parties."

Haralal said not a word, but he sent a letter saying that he could no longer remain as tutor to Venu.

When Venu came back from school, he found his tutor's room empty. Even that broken steel trunk of his had vanished. The rope was stretched across the corner but there were no clothes or towels hanging on it. But on the table, which formerly was strewn with books and papers stood a bowl containing some gold-fish. On the bowl was a label inscribed with the word 'Venu' in Haralal's hand-writing. At once the boy ran up to his father and asked him what had happened. His father told him that Haralal had resigned his post. Venu went to his room, flung himself down and began to cry so bitterly that Adharlal could in no way comfort him.

Next day, Haralal was sitting on his wooden bedstead in the Hostel debating whether he should attend his college lectures, when suddenly he saw Adhar Babu's servant coming into his room followed by Venu. Venu at once ran up to him, threw his arms round his neck and asked him to come back to the house.

Haralal could not explain why it was absolutely possible for him to go back, but, whenever he thought of those clinging arms and that pleading voice, a lump seemed to rise in his throat.

6

Haralal, after this sad parting from his little friend, found, that his mind was unsettled, and that he had little chance of winning a scholarship, even if he could pass the examination. At the same time, he knew that without the scholarship, he could not continue his studies. So he tried to obtain employment in some office.

Fortunately for him, the English Manager of a mercantile firm took a fancy to him at first sight. After a brief exchange of words the Manager asked him whether he had had any experience, and whether he could bring any testimonials. Haralal could only answer 'No'; nevertheless a post was offered him at a salary of two rupees a month, and a sum of fifteen rupees was allowed him in advance to enable him to come properly dressed to the office.

The Manager made Haralal work extremely hard. He had to stay on after office hours and sometimes at his master's house late in the evening. But, in this he learnt his work quicker than others, and his fellow clerks became jealous of him and tried to injure him but without effect. As soon as his salary was raised to forty rupees a month, he took a small house in a narrow lane and brought his mother to live with him. Thus happiness came back to his mother after weary years of waiting.

Haralal's mother frequently said that she would like to see Vennugopal, of whom she had heard so much. She wished to prepare some dishes with her own hand and to ask him to come just once to dine with her son. Haralal avoided the subject by saying that his house was not big enough to invite him to.

Then news reached Haralal that Venu's mother was dead. He could not wait a moment, but went at once to Atharal's house to see Venu, and from that time onwards they began to see each other frequently.

But times had changed. Venu, stroking his budding moustache, had grown quite the young man of fashion. His friends were numerous, and they suited well his present position. The old dilapidated study chair and ink-stained desk had vanished, and the room now seemed to be bursting with pride at its new acquisitions—its looking-glasses, oleographs, and other furniture. Venu had entered college, but showed no haste to cross the boundary of the Intermediate examination.

Haralal remembered his mother's request to invite Venu to dinner. After great hesitation, he did so. Vennugopal, with his handsome face, at once won the mother's heart. But as soon as the meal was over he became impatient to go, and looking at his gold watch he explained that he had pressing engagements elsewhere. Then he jumped into his carriage, which was waiting at the door, and drove away. Haralal with a sigh said to himself that he would never invite him again.

8.

One day, on returning from office, Haralal noticed

a man sitting in the dark room on the ground floor of his house. He would perhaps have passed him by, had not the heavy scent of some foreign perfume attracted his attention. Haralal asked who was there, and the answer came:

"It is I, Master Mashai."

"What is the matter, Venu?" said Haralal. "When did you come here?"

"I came hours ago," said Venu. "I did not know that you returned so late."

They went upstairs together and Haralal lighted the lamp and asked Venu how he was getting on. Venu replied that his college classes were becoming a fearful bore, and his father did not realize how dreadfully hard it was for him to go on in the same class, year after year, with students much younger than himself. Haralal asked him what he wished to do. Venu then told him that he wanted to go to England and become a barrister. He gave an instance of a student, much less advanced in his college course, who was getting ready to go. Haralal asked him if he had received his father's permission. Venu replied that his father would not hear a word of it until he had passed the Intermediate Examination, and that was an impossibility in his present frame of mind. Haralal suggested that he himself might go and try to talk over Venu's father.

"No," said Venu, "I can never allow that!"

Haralal asked Venu to stay to dinner, and while they were waiting he gently placed his hand on Venu's

shoulder and said: "Venu, you should not quarrel with your father, or leave home."

Venu jumped up angrily and said that if he was not welcome, he could go elsewhere. Haralal caught him by the hand and implored him not to go away without dining. But Venu snatched his hand away and was on the point of leaving the room when Haralal's mother brought the food in on a tray. Seeing Venu about to leave she pressed him to remain, and he did so, but with bad grace.

While he was seated at dinner the sound of a carriage was heard stopping at the door. First a servant entered the room with creaking shoes and then Adhar Babu himself. At the sight of his father Venu's face became pale. The mother left the room as soon as she saw strangers enter. Adhar Babu began to abuse Haralal in a voice thick with anger: "Ratikanta gave me full warning but I could not believe that you were a man of such devilish cunning. So, you think you're going to live upon Venu? This is sheer kidnapping and I shall prosecute you in the Police Court."

Venu silently followed his father out of the house.

9

The firm in which Haralal was employed, began to buy up large quantities of rice and dal from the country districts. To purchase this produce, Haralal had to take the cash every Saturday morning by the early train and pay it out. There were special centres where the brokers

and middlemen used to come with their receipts and accounts for settlement. Some discussion had taken place in the office about Haralal being entrusted with this work, without any security but the Manager undertook all the responsibility and said that security was not needed. This special work used to go on from the middle of December to the middle of April, and Haralal frequently returned from it very late at night.

One day, after his return from work, his mother told him that Venu had called and that she had persuaded him to dine with them. This had happened more than once. The mother said that it was because Venu missed his own mother, and the tears came into her eyes as she spoke about it.

On one such occasion Venu waited for Haralal to return and had a long talk with him.

"Master Mashai!" he said. "Father has lately become so irritable that I can no longer live with him. And, besides, I know that he is thinking of marrying again. Ratikanta is seeking a suitable match, and they are always conspiring about it. There used to be a time when my father would be anxious if I were absent from home even for a few hours. Now, if I am away for more than a week, he takes no notice,—indeed, he is greatly relieved. If this marriage takes place, I feel that I cannot live in the house any longer. You must show me a way out of this. I want to become independent."

Haralal felt deeply grieved, but he could not see how he could help his former pupil. Venu said that he determined to go to England and become a barrister.

Somehow or other he must get the passage money out of his father, he might borrow it on a note of hand and then his father would have to pay when the creditors filed a suit. With this borrowed money he might get away, and when he was in England his father was bound to send money to meet his expenses.

"But, Haradal asked, "who is there, that would advance you the money?"

"You!" said Venu.

"I?" exclaimed Haradal in amazement.

"Yes," said Venu, "I've seen the servant bringing heaps of money here in bags."

The servant and the money belong to someone else.

Haradal explained why the money came to his house at night like birds to their nest to be scattered next morning.

"But can't the Manager advance the sum?" Venu asked.

"He may do so," said Haradal, "if your father can be security."

At this point the discussion ended.

10

One Friday night a carriage and pair stopped before Haradal's lodging house. When Venu was announced, Haradal was sitting on the floor of his bedroom, counting some money. Venu entered dressed in an unaccustomed manner. He had discarded his Bengali dress and was wearing a Parsi coat and trousers and on his head

of the bags appeared to be empty. He knocked them against the iron safe, but this only proved his fear to be true. Nevertheless he opened them and shook them with all his might. But he could find nothing in them but two letters from Venu, one of which was addressed to his father and the other to himself.

Hatalal tore open his own letter and tried to read it. But the words seemed to run into one another. He trimmed the lamp, but felt that he could not understand what he read. Yet the purport of the letter was clear. Venu had taken three thousand rupees in currency notes, and had started for England. The steamer was to sail before day-break that very morning. The letter ended with the words: "I am explaining everything in a letter to my father. He will pay off the debt, and then, again, my mother's ornaments, which I have left in your care, will more than cover the amount I have taken."

Hatalal looked up his cousin and hired a rickshaw¹ hurried to the jetty. But he did not know even the name of the steamer which Venu had taken. He ran the whole length of the wharves from Principe (that is Metabary) He found that two steamers had sailed for England early that morning. It was impossible for him to tell at which of the two sailed Venu, or how to catch

1. Now Hatalal returned home, the rain was still going on, and the little was awake. Everything before seemed changed. He felt as if he were passing a fearful barrier, and almost lost his way. He

where he had been. With a strained laugh he said to her, "To bring home a lude for myself!" And then he fauted away.

After some time, Haralal recovered consciousness, and opening his eyes asked his mother to leave him. Entering his room he shut the door, while his mother sat at the door of the verandah in the fierce glare of the sun. She kept calling to him fitfully, almost mechanically, "Bala, Bala!"

As usual, the servant came from the Manager's office and knocked at the door, saying that they would miss the train if they did not start at once. Haralal called from inside. "Cannot start this morning."

"Then, where are we to go, Sir?"

"I will tell you later on."

The servant went downstairs with a gesture of impatience.

Suddenly Haralal thought of the ornaments which Venu had left behind. He had completely forgotten about them, but with the thought came instant relief. He took the leather bag containing them, and also Venu's letter to his father, and left the house.

Before he reached Adharlal's house he could hear the band playing for the wedding, yet on entering he could feel that there had been some disturbance. Haralal was told that there had been a theft the night before and that some of the servants were suspected. Adhar Babu was sitting in the upper verandah flushed with anger and Ratikanta was sitting near him smoking his hookah. Haralal said to Adhar Babu, "I have some-

thing to tell you in private." Adharlal's anger flared up, and he shouted "I have no time now!" He was afraid that Haralal had come to borrow money or to ask his help. Ratikanta suggested that if Haralal felt uncomfortable in making any request in his presence he would leave. Adharlal told him angrily to sit where he was. Then Haralal handed over the bag which Venu had left behind. Adharlal asked what was inside, so Haralal opened it and gave him the contents.

Then Adhar Bahu said with a sneer: "It's a paying business that you two have started—you and your former pupil! You were certain that the stolen property would be traced, and so you bring it to me to claim a reward!"

Haralal presented the letter which Venu had written to his father, but this only made Adharlal the more furious.

"What's all this?" he shouted, "I'll call the police! My son has not yet come of age,—and you have smuggled him out of the country! I'll bet my soul you've lent him a few hundred rupees, and then taken a note of hand for three thousand! But I am not going to be bound by this!"

"I have not advanced him a single pice," protested Haralal.

"Then how did he find it?" asked Adharlal. "Do you mean to tell me he broke open your safe and stole it?"

Haralal stood silent, while Ratikanta sarcastically remarked, "I don't believe this fellow ever set hands on so much as three thousand rupees in his life."

It is import & export goods unlawful
= निर्यात (निर्यात) - अस्वीकार्य (अस्वीकार्य) .

When Haralal left the house it seemed to him that he had passed beyond all possibility of fear or anxiety. His mind seemed to refuse to work. As soon as he entered the lane he saw a carriage waiting before his house. For a moment he felt certain that it was Venu's. It was impossible to believe that his calamity could be so hopelessly final.

Haralal went quickly up to the carriage, but found an English assistant from the firm sitting inside it. The man got down when he saw Haralal, seized him by the wrist and asked him, "Why didn't you leave by the train this morning?" The servant had told the Manager his suspicions and he had sent this man to find out.

Haralal answered, "Because I found that notes to the value of three thousand rupees were missing."

The man asked how that could have happened, but Haralal was silent.

Seeing his embarrassment, the assistant said to Haralal, "Let us go upstairs together and see where you keep your money." So they went up to the room, counted the money and made a thorough search of the house.

When Haralal's mother saw this she could contain herself no longer. She therefore came up to the stranger and asked her son what had happened. The man answered in broken Hindustani that some money had been stolen.

"Stolen!" the mother cried, "Why! How could it be stolen? Who would do such a dastardly thing?" But Haralal forbade her to speak.

The man collected the remainder of the money and

told Haralal to come with him to the Manager. The mother barred the way and said:

'Sir, where are you taking my son? I have done everything in my power. I have even starved myself, so that he might be brought up to do honest work. My son would never touch money that was not his own.'

The Englishman, not knowing Bengali, could only reply, 'Achha' Achha.' Haralal entreated his mother not to be anxious, he would explain it all to the Manager and soon be back again. His mother, distressed by the fact that her son had eaten nothing all morning, begged him to remain a moment to break his fast, but Haralal disregarding her appeal, stepped into the carriage and drove away, and the mother in the anguish of her heart sank in the ground.

When Haralal came into the Manager's presence, he was asked: "Tell me the truth, What did happen?" but Haralal could only reply, "I haven't taken any money."

"I fully believe it," said the Manager, "but surely you know who has taken it."

Haralal remained silent, with his eyes on the ground.

"Somebody," said the Manager, "must have taken it with your connivance."

"Nobody," replied Haralal, "Could take it away with my knowledge unless he first took my life."

"Look here, Haralal," said the Manager, "I trusted you completely. I took no security. I employed you in a post of great responsibility. Every one in the office as against me for doing so. The three thousand rupees

"a small concern, but the shame of all this to me is a great matter. I will do one thing. I will give you the whole day to bring back this money. If you do so, I shall say nothing about it and I shall keep you on in your post."

It was eleven o'clock, when Haralal with bent head walked out of the office and left his fellow-clerks to revolt meanly over his disgrace.

"What can I *do*? What can I *do*?" Haralal repeated to himself, the sun's heat pouring down, as he walked along like one dazed. At last his mind ceased to think at all about what could be done, but he continued to walk mechanically.

This city of Calcutta, which offered its shelter to thousands upon thousands of men, had become like a steel trap. He could see no way out. The whole body of people was conspiring to surround and hold him captive.

this most insignificant of men, whom no one knew. Nobody had any special grudge against him, yet everybody was his enemy. The crowd passed by, brushing against him—clerks from different offices ate their lunch on the road-side out of plates made of leaves—a tired wayfarer on the Maulan, was lying under the shade of a tree, with one hand beneath his head and one leg crossed over the other—up-country women, crowded into hackney carriages, were on their way to the temple—a chuprassie came up with a letter and asked him the address on the envelope, so the afternoon went by, till one by one the offices began to close. Carriages started off in all directions, carrying people back to their homes. The clerks,

packed tightly on the seats of the trams, looked at the theatre advertisements as they returned home. It came into his mind that he was no longer a unit in this throng,—no work would engage him all day long, and there would come no pleasant evening release from toil. He had no need to hurry to catch the homeward tram. All the busy occupations of the city—the buildings—the houses and carriages—the incessant traffic—seemed sometimes to swell into dreadful reality, and at other times, to subside into the shadowy unreal.

Haralal had eaten no food, taken no rest, nor sheltered from the sun all that day.

The lamps in one street after another were lighted till it seemed to him that a pervading darkness, like some demon, was keeping its eyes wide open to watch every movement of its victim. Haralal had not the energy even to enquire how late it was. The veins on his forehead throbbed, and he felt as if his head must burst. Through paroxysms of pain, which alternated with the apathy of dejection, one thought came again and again from among the innumerable multitudes in that vast city, the image of only one person rose before his mental vision, and one name alone found its way through his dry throat,—‘Mother!’

He said to himself, “In the depth of night, when no one is awake to arrest me—me, the least of all men,—will silently creep to my mother’s arms and fall asleep. ‘may I never wake again!’”

Haralal’s one trouble was lest some police officer should molest him in the presence of his mother and

family

thus prevent him from going home. When at last it became an agony for him to walk further, he hailed a carriage. The driver asked him where he wanted to go. He said, "Nowhere, I want to drive across the Maidan to breathe some fresh air." The man at first did not believe him and was about to drive on, when Haralal put a rupee into his hand as earnest of payment. Thereupon the driver crossed, and then re-crossed, the Maidan from one side to the other by different roads.

Haralal laid his throbbing head on the side of the open window of the carriage and closed his eyes. Slowly all the pain abated. A deep and intense peace filled his heart and a supreme deliverance seemed to embrace him on every side. It was *not* true,—this day's despair which threatened to drag him into utter helplessness. It was *not* true, it was false. He knew now that it was only a vain fear that his mind had conjured up from nothing. Deliverance was in the infinite sky and there was no end to peace. No king or emperor in the world had the power to keep captive this nonentity, this Haralal. In the sky, surrounding his emancipated heart on every side, he felt the presence of his mother, that one poor woman. She seemed to grow and grow till she filled the infinity of darkness. All the roads and buildings and shops of Calcutta gradually became enveloped by her. In her presence all his pain vanished; thought, consciousness itself, closed. It seemed as though a bubble filled with the hot vapour of pain had burst, and now there was neither darkness nor light, but only one tense fulness.

The Cathedral clock struck one. The driver called

out impatiently : " Halon, my horse can't go on any longer. Where do you want to go? "

There came no answer

The driver came down and shook Harald and asked him again where he wanted to go

There came no answer

And this was a question that never received its answer from Harald

WORDS TO BE STUDIED

broker. This word meant originally a 'broacher,' one who broached, or made a hole in, casks of wine to test their value for sale. Then it came to mean a middleman in a sale.

attorney. This word comes from the Old French 'tourner' meaning to turn. The original sense of the word is "one who turns or transfers (property)," and thus it comes to mean one who is appointed to do legal business in the name of another. Compare the phrase "*power of attorney*."

mortgage. This comes from the two words 'mort' meaning 'death' and 'gage' meaning 'pledge,'—a death pledge. It is used for the transfer of property as a pledge or guarantee that the debt will be paid. Compare *mortuary*, *mortal*, *mortify*, *mortmain*, also compare *engage*, *disengage*, *wage*, *wager*.

repulsed. From the Latin 'pulsare,' to drive. This word has a simpler form 'pellere.' We have thus two series of words —

refel, *impel*, *compel*, *expel*, *dispel*,

repulse, *impulse* (noun), *compulsion*, *expulsion*.

amiability. This word comes from the Latin 'amicus' friend

and is the same in origin as 'amicability'. Compare *amicable* and *amiable*.

salary This originally meant "*salt*/money" from the Latin '*sal*' meaning 'salt'. First, it meant the 'salt-money' given to soldiers, then it meant a fixed pay. Compare the use of *namak* in India,—*namak khūnā*,—which is somewhat similar.

Liliputian. This word has come into the English language from a famous story-book called "*Gulliver's Travels*". "*Liliput*" was a place where tiny people lived and "*Brobdingnag*" was a place where giants lived. These two words are therefore sometimes used, in an amusing manner, to represent respectively the land of dwarfs and the land of giants.

B A degree These titles were originally used in the old medieval universities of Europe. The word 'bachelor' was taken from its use in chivalry, where it meant a young knight not yet fully qualified or equipped. Then came the Master, or fully qualified person. A secondary meaning of bachelor, which is now the most common, is 'an unmarried person,'—a man not being considered fully qualified or equipped till he is married.

romance This word has a very interesting history. The Latin language was the literary language of the South of Europe for many centuries and the vernacular languages were despised. The word for 'vernacular' was '*romanicus*' as contrasted with '*Latinus*,' i.e. Latin. The old folk stories of the Middle Ages were written in the vernacular or 'romance' languages, and as these stories were strange and mysterious, the word romance became used for this kind of literature.

pathetic From the Greek word '*pathos*' meaning 'suffering'.

compare *pathos*, *sympathy*, *pathology*, *electropathy*, *allopathy*, *homoeopathy*.

dilapidated. From the Latin '*lapis*' meaning a 'stone.' It probably means to separate stone from stone. Compare *lapidary*, *dilapidation*.

intermediate. From the Latin '*medius*' meaning 'middle.' Compare *mediate*, *immediate*, *medium*, *mediocrity*, *mediator*.

police. From the Greek '*polis*' meaning a 'city.' Compare *politis*, *policy*, *metropolis*, *politician*.

barrister. From the word '*bar*.' There was a bar in the law court, from which the lawyer pleaded his case. So the pleader was called a *barister*. Compare the phrase "*called to the Bar*."

obstacle. From the Latin word '*stare*' to stand. Compare *obstinate*, *station*, *status*, *statute*, *instant*, *distance*, *constant*.

dastardly. A word of doubtful origin,—probably akin to the word '*dazed*.'

reality. From the Latin word '*res*' meaning a 'thing.' Compare *real*, *unreal*, *realize*, *republic*, *really*, *realization*.

alternated. From the Latin '*alter*' meaning 'other.' Compare *alteration*, *alternative*, *alter*, *altercate*.

infinity. From the Latin '*finis*' meaning 'end.' Compare *finish*, *finite*, *definite*, *confine*.

VI—SUBHA.

When the girl was given the name of Subhashini who could have guessed that she would be dumb when she grew up? Her two elder sisters were Sukeshini and Subhasini, and for the sake of uniformity her father named his youngest girl Subhashini. She was called Subha for short.

Her two elder sisters had been married with the usual difficulties in finding husbands and providing dowries, and now the youngest daughter lay like a silent weight upon the heart of her parents. People seemed to think that, because she did not speak, therefore she did not feel; they discussed her future and their anxiety concerning it even in her presence. She had understood from her earliest childhood that God had sent her like a curse to her father's house, so she withdrew herself from ordinary people and tried to live apart. If only they would all forget her she felt she could endure it. But who can forget pain? Night and day her parents' minds ached with anxiety on her account. Her mother especially looked upon her as a deformity. To a mother a daughter is a more closely intimate part of herself than a son can be, and a fault in her is a source of personal shame. Banikantha, Subha's father, loved her rather better than he did his other daughters, her mother almost hated her as a stain upon her own body.

If Subha lacked speech, she did not lack a pair of

Every hut and stack in the place could be seen by the passing boatmen. I know not if amid these signs of worldly wealth any one noticed the little girl who, when her work was done, stode away to the waterside and sat there. But here Nature herself made up for her want of speech and spoke for her. The murmur of the brook, the voice of the village folk, the songs of the boatmen, the cry of the birds and the rustle of trees mingled and were one with the trembling of her heart. They became one vast wave of sound which beat upon her restless soul. This murmur and movement of Nature were the dumb girl's language; that speech of the dark eyes, which the long lashes shaded, was the language of the world about her. From the trees, where the cicadas chirped, to the quiet stars there was nothing but signs and gestures, weeping and sighing. And in the deep mid-noon, when the boatmen and fisherfolk had gone to their dinner, when the villagers slept and the birds were still, when the ferry-boats were idle when the great busy world paused in its toil and became suddenly a lonely, awful giant, then beneath the vast unresponsive heavens there were only dumb Nature and a dumb girl sitting very silent, one under the spreading sunlight the other where a small tree cast its shadow.

But Subha was not altogether without friends. In the stall were two cows, Sarbhashu and Panguli. They had never heard their names from her lips, but they knew her footfall. Though she could form no words, she murmured lovingly and they understood her gentle murmuring better than all speech. When she fondled them or

scolded or coaxed them, they understood her better than men could do. Subha would come to the shed and throw her arms round Saibbashi's neck; she would rub her cheek against her friend's, and Panguli would turn her great kind eyes and lick her face. The girl visited them regularly three times a day, and at many an odd moment as well. Whenever she heard any words that hurt her, she would come to these dumb friends even though it might not be the hour for a regular visit. It was as though they guessed her anguish of spirit from her look of quiet sadness. Coming close to her, they would rub their horns softly against her arms, and in dumb, puzzled fashion try to comfort her. Besides these, there were goats and a kitten; but Subha had not the same equal friendship with them, though they showed the same attachment. Every time it got a chance, night or day, the kitten would jump into her lap, and settle down to slumber, and show its appreciation of an aid to sleep as Subha drew her soft fingers over its neck and back.

Subha had a comrade also among the higher animals, and it is hard to say what were the girl's relations with him; for he could speak, and his gift of speech left them without any common language. He was the youngest boy of the Gosains, Pratap by name, an idle fellow. After long effort, his parents had abandoned the hope of his ever making a living. Now losers have this advantage, that though their own folk disapprove of them, they are generally popular with every one else. Having no work to chain them, they become public property. Just as every town needs an open space where all may breathe,

so a village needs two or three gentlemen of leisure, who can give time to all; then, if we are lazy and want a companion, *one is to hand*

Pratap's chief ambition was to catch fish. He managed to waste a lot of time this way, and might have been almost any afternoon so employed. It was thus most often that he met Subha. Whatever he was about, he liked a companion; and, when *one is trying to catch fish*, a silent companion is best of all. Pratap respected Subha for her silence, and as every one called her Subha, he showed his affection by calling her *Su*. Subha used to sit beneath a tamarind tree, and Pratap a little distance off would cast his line. Pratap took with him a small allowance of betel, and Subha prepared it for him. And I think that, sitting there and gazing a long while, she desired ardently to bring some great help to Pratap to be of real aid, to prove by any means that she was not a useless burden in the world. But there was nothing to do. Then she turned to the Creator in prayer for some rare power, that by an astonishing miracle she might startle Pratap into exclaiming "My! I never dreamt our *Su* could do this!"

Only think, if Subha had been a water nymph, she might have risen slowly from the river, bringing the gem of a snake's crown to the landing-place. Then Pratap, leaving his paltry fishing, might have dived into the lower world, and seen there, on a golden bed in a palace of silver, whom else but dumb little *Su*, Bankantha's child! Yes, our *Su*, the only daughter of the king of that shining city of jewels! But that might not be, it was

impossible. Not that anything is really impossible, but Su had been born, not into the royal house of Patalpur but into Banikantha's family, and thus she knew of no means by which she might astonish the thosains' boy.

She grew up, and little by little began to find herself. A new unexpressible consciousness like a tide from the central places of the sea, when the moon is full, swept through her. She saw herself, questioned herself, but no answer came that she could understand.

Late one night, when the moon was full, she slowly opened her door, and timidly peeped out. Nature, herself at full moon, like lonely Subha, was looking down on the sleeping earth. Subha's strong young life beat within her; joy and sadness filled her being to its brim: she had felt mutterably lonely before, but her feeling of loneliness was this moment at its intensest. Her heart was heavy, and she could not speak. At the skirts of this silent troubled Mother there stood a silent troubled girl.

The thought of her marriage filled her parents with anxious care. People blamed them, and even talked of making them outcasts. Banikantha was well off, his family even had fish-curry twice daily, and consequently he did not lack enemies. Then the women interfered, and Bani went away for a few days. Presently he returned and said: "We must go to Calcutta."

They got ready to go to this strange place. Subha's heart was heavy with tears, like a mist-wrapt dawn. With a vague fear that had been gathering for days, she gazed her father and mother like a dumb animal. With

the next were assured; "Oh! their
the west, and shortly after the minutes
the thick.

In less than ten days every one knew that the br
was dumb! At least, if any one did not, it was not
fault, for she deceived no one. Her eyes told them ev
up, though no one understood her. She looked
s hands, but found no speech; she mislaid the

At least, if any one did not, it was not in the west, and shortly after the marriage he took a wife thicker.

Thank God! Their case in this world and their safety in the next were assured! The bridegroom's work is done on an auspicious day. Having delivered their daughter into another's hands, Sulaiman's parents returned home to their own.

The ultimate was completed, and the marriage took place on an auspicious day. Having delivered their daughter into another's hands, Sulaiman's parents returned home to their own.

The ultimate was committed, and the marriage took place only ten days later. The wedding was a most brilliant affair, and the bride and groom were the center of attraction. The bride was a beautiful girl, and the groom was a young man of great promise. The wedding was a most brilliant affair, and the bride and groom were the center of attraction. The bride was a beautiful girl, and the groom was a young man of great promise.

[illegible]

familiar from birth, of those who had understood a dumb girl's language. In her silent heart there sounded in endless, voiceless weeping, which only the Searcher of hearts could hear.

WORDS TO BE STUDIED.

uniformity From the Latin 'unus,' meaning 'one,' and 'forma,' meaning 'form.' Compare *universe, unison, unite, formalism, formation, reform, deformed, deformity* (the last word occurs in the next paragraph of the story).

translation The Latin word meaning 'to bring,' has two-roots, viz. 'ter' and 'lat.' This word is taken from the second root. We have the two parallel series of words in English transfer, refer, confer, differ, etc.

puzzled This is one of the words in the English language whose origin is doubtful. It probably comes from the word to 'pose,' (which itself is a shortened form of 'oppose') meaning to set forward a difficult problem.

losets An uncommon English word meaning a person who is good for nothing. The word is derived from the verb to 'lose.'

tactiturnity The Latin word 'tacitus,' means 'quiet' or 'silent' (compare *tact, tacitly, reticent, reticence*). It is probably the short form of 'My eye.'

dogged The word in this sense means to follow like a dog, to follow closely. From this we have the adjective 'dogged' pronounced as two syllables dogged, meaning persevering, persistent, never giving in, &c. dogged courage.

disregarded From the French 'garder' or 'guarder,' meaning

'to keep.' This French word appears in many English forms. Compare *seward*, *guard*, *guerdon*, *guardian*, *warder*, *regard*.

dizzy. This word comes from an old Saxon root, which has left many words in modern English. Compare *daze*, *dazed*, *dazzle*, *dose*, *drovse*, *droesy*.

deceived. From the Latin word 'capere,' meaning to take. The English verbs such as 'receive,' 'conceive,' 'perceive' have come into English from the French. The Latin root is more clearly seen in the nouns such as 'deception,' 'reception,' 'perception,' etc. It should be carefully noticed that these 'French' forms are spelt *ei* instead of *ie*. A simple rule is this, that after *c* write *ei* not *ie*, but after other consonants write *ie*. Compare the spelling of *believe*, *grieve*, *relieve* with that of *receive*, *deceive*.

The postmaster took up his duties first in the village of I Lapur. Though the village was small, there was an indigo factory near it, and the proprietor, an Englishman, had managed to get a post office established.

This postmaster belonged to Calcutta. He felt like a fish out of water in this remote village. His office and living-room were in a dark thatched shed, not far from a green, stony pond, surrounded on all sides by a dense growth.

The men employed in the indigo factory had no leisure; moreover they were hardly desirable companions for decent folk. Nor is a Calcutta boy an adept in the art of associating with others. Among strangers he appears either proud or ill at ease. At any rate, the postmaster had but little company, nor had he much work to do.

At times he tried his hand at writing verse. That the movement of the leaves and the clouds of the sky were enough to fill life with joy, such were the sentiments to which he sought to give expression. But God knows that the poor fellow would have felt it as the gift of a new life, if some genie of the *Indian Nights* had in one night swept away the trees, leaves and all, and substituted for them a macadamised road, and had hidden the clouds from view with rows of tall houses.

The postmaster's salary was small. He had to cook

'to keep.' This French word appears in many English forms. Compare *reward, guard, guerdon, guardian, ward, warden, regard*.

lizzy This word comes from an old Saxon root, which has left many words in modern English. Compare *'daze, dazed, dazle, daze, drowse, drowsy*.

received. From the Latin word 'capere,' meaning to take. The English verbs such as 'receive,' 'conceive,' 'perceive' have come into English from the French. The Latin root is more clearly seen in the nouns such as 'deception,' 'reception,' 'perception,' etc. It should be carefully noticed that these 'French' forms are spelt *ceive* instead of *ieve*. A simple rule is this, that after *c* write *ei* not *ie*, but after other consonants write *ie*. Compare the spelling of *believe, grieve, relieve* with that of *receive, deceive*.

her. She called to mind a little brother that she had--and how on some bygone cloudy day she had played at fishing with him on the edge of the pond, with a twig for a fishing-rod. Such little incidents would drive out greater events from her mind. Thus, as they talked, it would often get very late, and the postmaster would feel too lazy to do any cooking at all. Ratan would then hastily light the fire, and toast some unleavened bread, which with the cold remnants of the morning meal, was enough for their supper.

On some evenings, seated at his desk in the corner of the big empty shed, the postmaster too would call up memories of his own home, of his mother and his sister, or those for whom in his exile his heart was sad,--memories which were always haunting him, but which he could not reveal to the men of the factory, though he found himself naturally recalling them aloud in the presence of the simple little girl. And so it came about that the girl would allude to his people as mother, brother, and sister, as it she had known them all her life. Indeed she had a complete picture of each one of them painted in her heart.

One day at noon, during a break in the rains, there was a cool soft breeze blowing, the smell of the damp grass and leaves in the hot sun felt like the warm breathing on one's body of the tired earth. A persistent bird repeated all the afternoon the burden of its one complaint in Nature's audience chamber.

The postmaster had nothing to do. The shimmer of the freshly washed leaves and the banked-up remnants

his own meals, which he used to share with Ratan, an orphan girl of the village, who did odd jobs for him.

When, in the evening, the smoke began to curl upwards from the village cow-sheds, and the crickets chirped in every bush, when the mendicants of the Haul sect sang their shrill songs in their daily meeting-place; when any poet, who had attempted to watch the movement of the leaves in the dense bamboo thickets, would have felt a ghostly shiver run down his back, the postmaster would light his little lamp, and call out 'Ratan.'

Ratan would sit outside waiting for this call, and, instead of coming in at once, would reply, 'Did you call me, Sir?'

'What are you doing?' the postmaster would ask.

'I must go and light the kitchen fire' she would reply.

And the postmaster would say—'Oh, let the kitchen fire wait for a while, light me my pipe first.'

At last Ratan would enter, with puffed-out cheeks, vigorously blowing into a flame a live coal to light the tobacco. This would give the postmaster an opportunity of chatting with her. 'Well, Ratan, perhaps he would begin, do you remember anything of your mother?' That was a fertile subject. Ratan partly remembered, and partly forgot. Her father had been kinder to her than her mother. But she recollected more vividly. He used to come home in the evening after his work, and even at two o'clock he stood out more clearly than others, like a star in her memory. Ratan would sit on the floor at the postmaster's feet, as her mother used to do.

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of the retreating rain-clouds were sights to see; and the postmaster was watching them and thinking to himself. 'Oh, if only some kindred soul were near – just one loving human being whom I could hold near my heart.' This was exactly, he went on to think, what that bird was trying to say, and it was the same feeling which the murmuring leaves were striving to express. But no one knows, or would believe, that such an idea might also take possession of an ill-paid village postmaster in the deep, silent mid-day interval in his work.

The postmaster sighed, and called out 'Ratan.' Ratan was then stretched at full length beneath the guava-tree, busily engaged in eating unripe guavas. At the voice of her master, she ran up breathlessly, saying 'Did you call me, Dada?' 'I was thinking of teaching you to read,' said the postmaster. And then for the rest of the afternoon he taught her the alphabet.

Thus, in a very short time, Ratan had got as far as the double consonants.

It seemed as though the rains would never end. Canals, ditches, and hollows were all flooded with water.

Day and night the patter of rain was heard, and the croaking of frogs. The village roads became impassable, and marketing had to be done in panta.

One heavily clouded morning, the postmaster's little pupil had been waiting long outside the door to be called, but as the usual summons did not come, she took up her dog-eared book, and slowly entered the room. She found her master lying on his back, and

As he was resting, she was about to retire on tip-

too, when she suddenly heard her name 'Ratan.' She turned at once and asked: 'Were you asleep, Dada?' The postmaster in a weak voice replied 'I am not well. Feel my head; is it very hot?'

In the loneliness of his exile, and in the gloom of the rains, he needed a little tender nursing. He longed to call to mind the touch on his forehead of soft hands with tinkling bangles, to imagine the presence of loving womanhood, the nearness of mother and sister. And the exile was not disappointed. Ratan ceased to be a little girl. She at once stepped into the part of mother, called in the village doctor, gave the patient his pills at the proper intervals, sat up all night by his pillow, cradled his gruel for him, and every now and then asked: 'Are you feeling a little better, Dada?'

It was some time before the postmaster, though still weak, was able to leave his sick-bed. 'No more of this,' said he with decision. 'I must apply for a transfer from this place.' He wrote off at once to Calcutta an application for a transfer, on the ground of the unhealthiness of the spot.

Relieved from her duties as nurse, Ratan again took up her former place outside the door. But she no longer heard the same old call. She would sometimes furtively peep inside to find the postmaster sitting on his chair or stretched on his bed, and gazing absently out the air. While Ratan was awaiting her call, the postmaster was awaiting a reply to his application. The girl read her old lessons over and over again, but great fear was lest when the call came, she might be found waiting in the

able consonants. After a week's waiting, one evening, a summons came. With an overflowing heart Ratan rushed into the room and cried, as she used to cry: 'Dada, call me, Dada?'

The postmaster said 'I am going away to-morrow, Ratan.'

'Where are you going, Dada?'

'I am going home.'

'When will you come back?'

'I am not coming back.'

Ratan asked no more. The postmaster, of his own accord, went on to tell her that his application for a transfer had been rejected, so he had resigned his post and was going home.

For a long time neither of them spoke. The lamp burned dimly, and from a leak in one corner of the catch water dripped steadily into an earthen vessel on the floor beneath.

After a while Ratan rose, and went off to the kitchen to prepare the meal; but she was not so quick about it as before. Many new things to think of had entered her little brain. When the postmaster had finished his supper, the girl suddenly asked him: 'Dada, will you take me home with you?'

The postmaster laughed. 'What an idea!' said he, but he did not think it necessary to explain to the girl wherein lay the absurdity of such a course.

That whole night, awake and asleep, the postmaster's laughing reply haunted her,—'What an idea!'

When he woke up in the morning, the postmaster

found his bath ready. He had continued his Calcutta habit of bathing in water drawn and kept in pitchers, instead of taking a plunge in the river as was the custom of the village. For some reason or other, the girl could not ask him the time of his departure, she had therefore fetched the water from the river long before sunrise, so that it should be ready as soon as he might want it. After the bath came a call for Ratan. She entered without a sound and looked silently into her master's face for orders. The master said 'You need not be anxious about my going away, Ratan, I shall tell my successor to look after you. These words were kindly meant, no doubt, but inscrutable are the ways of a woman's heart.'

Ratan had borne many a scolding from her master without complaint, but these kind words she could not bear. She burst out weeping, and said 'No, no, you need not tell anybody anything at all about me, I don't want to stay here any longer.'

The postmaster was dumbfounded. He had never seen Ratan like this before.

The new man duly arrived, and the postmaster, gave over charge, and prepared to depart. Just before starting he called Ratan and said 'Here is something for you. I hope it will keep you for some little time.' He brought out from his pocket the whole of his month's salary, retaining only a trifle for the journey. Then Ratan fell at his feet and cried 'Oh, Dada pray don't give me anything, don't in any way trouble about me, and then she ran away out of sight.

The postmaster heaved a sigh, took up his bag put

his umbrella over his shoulder, and, accompanied by a man carrying his many-coloured tin trunk, slowly made for the boat.

When he got in and the boat was under way, and the rain-swollen river, like a stream of tears welling up from the earth, swirled and sobbed at her bows, then he felt grieved at heart; the sorrow-stricken face of a village girl seemed to represent for him the great unspoken pervading grief of Mother Earth herself. At one moment he felt an impulse to go back and bring away with him that lonely waif, forsaken of the world. But the wind had just filled the sails, the boat had got well into the middle of the turbulent current, and already the village was left behind, and its outlying burning-ground had come into sight.

So the traveller, borne on the breast of the swift-flowing river, consoled himself with philosophical reflections on the numberless meetings and partings in the world, and on death, the great parting, from which there is no return.

But Ratan had no philosophy. She was wandering about the post office with the tears streaming from her eyes. It may be that she had still a hope lurking in some corner of her heart that her Dada would return, and perhaps that is why she could not tear herself away. 'Alas for our foolish human nature! Its fond mistakes are persistent. The dictates of reason take a long time to assert their sway. The surest proofs meanwhile are disbelieved. One clings desperately to some vain hope, till a day comes when it has soaked the heart dry and

then it breaks through its bonds and departs. After that comes the misery of awakening and then once again the longing to get back into the maze of the same mistakes.

WORDS TO BE STUDIED

indigo This word has a very interesting history. It means 'Indian'. The celebrated dark blue dye came from India. This dye was first known to the Greeks who called it 'Indikon', then to the Latins who called it *Indicum* then to the Italians and Spaniards who called it *Indigo*. It was introduced into England from Italy by artists and painters who kept the Italian word 'indigo' without change.

genie There is a Latin word 'genius' meaning originally 'spirit inhabiting a special place'. It is from this word that our English common noun 'genius' is taken meaning a 'specially gifted or inspired person, e.g. a man of genius'. But in the Arabian Nights a completely different Arabic word is found, viz. 'jinn' with its feminine form 'jinni'. This was written in English 'genie' and was confused with the word 'genius'. The plural of genie when used in this sense is *genii*, which is really the plural of the Latin word *genius*.

macadamised This is quite a modern word in English. It comes from the name of the inventor of this kind of road paving, who was Mr J. L. Macadam. He discovered that different layers of small stone rolled in, one after the other, can stand the wear and tear of traffic. We have similar words from other proper names. Compare, *boycott*, *burke*, *lynch*, etc.

- allude.** From the Latin 'ludere,' to play. Compare *prelude*, *interlude*, *delude*, *collusion*, *elude*, *elusive*, *allusion*.
- guava.** This word came into English from the Spanish. It is of great interest to trace the names of the fruits in English back to their sources, e.g. *currant* comes from Cornish, *mango* from the Portuguese *manga* (from the Tamil 'mankay' *fruit-tree*), *orange* from the Arabic 'narang' and Hindustani 'narangi', *apricot* from Arabic al-burquq, *date* from the Greek 'daktulos,' meaning 'finger'.
- alphabet.** The two first letters in the Greek language are called 'alpha' and 'beta' Then the whole series of letters was named an alphabeta or alphabet.
- consonants** From the Latin 'sonare,' to sound. Consonants are letters which 'sound with' the vowels. Compare *dissonant*, *assonance*, *sonant*, *sonorous*, *sonata*.
- canal** This is one example of a word taken into English from the Latin, through the French, having a companion word in English. The companion word in this case is *channel*. Compare *cavalry* and *chivalry*, *legal* and *loyal*, *guard* and *ward*.
- dumbfounded** This word has come into the English language from common speech. It is a mixture of the English word *dumb*, and the Latin 'fundere,' 'to pour,' which we find in *confound*, *profound*, *confusion*. It is not often that we get such hybrid words in earlier English, though to-day they are becoming common in the case of new words such as *motorcar*, *speedometer*, *airplane*, *waterplane*, *automobile*, etc. The old rule used to be that a compound word in English should have *both* its parts from the same language (e.g. both parts Latin, or Greek, or Saxon, etc.) But this rule is rapidly breaking down in common practice as new words rush into the English language to express

all the new discovered sources. We have English and Greek roots mixed (such as *asphalt*) and Latin and Greek mixed (such as *eccegraph*).

VIII — THE CASTAWAY.

As evening drew on the storm rose to its height. From the terrific downpour of rain, the crash of thunder, and the repeated flashes of lightning, you might think that a battle of gods and demons was raging in the skies. Black clouds waved like the flags of Doom. The Ganges was lashed into fury, and the trees in the gardens on either bank swayed from side to side sighing and groaning.

In a *closed room of one of the riverside houses at Chandernagore*, a husband and wife were seated on a bed spread on the floor, discussing intently an important question. Beside them an earthen lamp burned.

The husband, Sharat, was saying: 'I wish you would stay a few more days; you would then be able to return home quite strong again.'

The wife, Kulan, was saying: 'I have quite recovered already. It will not, cannot possibly, do me any harm to go home now.'

Every married person will at once understand that the conversation was not quite so brief as I have reported it. The matter was not difficult, but the arguments for and against did not *advance it towards a conclusion*. Like a rudderless boat, the discussion kept turning round and round the same point; and at last it threatened to be overwhelmed in a flood of tears.

Sharat said: 'The doctor thinks you should stop here a few days longer.'

Kiran replied 'Your doctor knows everything!'

'Well,' said Sharat, 'you know that just now all kinds of sickness are abroad. You would do well to stop here a month or two more.'

'And I suppose at this moment every one here is perfectly well?'

What had happened was this. Kiran was a universal favourite with her family and neighbours, so that, when she fell seriously ill they were all very anxious about her. The village wiseacres thought it shameless for her husband to make so much fuss about a mere wife and for him even to suggest a change of air. They asked Sharat whether he supposed that no woman had ever been ill before, or whether he had found out that the folk of the place to which he meant to take her were immortal. Did he imagine that the writ of Fate did not run there? But Sharat and his mother turned a deaf ear to them, thinking that the little life of their darling was of greater importance than the united wisdom of a village. People are wont to reason thus when danger threatens their loved ones. So Sharat went to Chandernagore, and Kiran recovered, though she was still very weak. There was a pained look on her face which filled the beholder with pity, and it wrung his heart to think how narrowly she had escaped death.

Kiran was fond of society and amusement, the loneliness of her riverside villa did not suit her at all. There was nothing to do, there were no interesting neighbours.

and she hated to be busy all day with medicine and diet. There was no fun in measuring doses and making fomentations. Such was the subject discussed in their closed room this stormy evening.

So long as Kiran deigned to argue, there was a chance of a fair fight. When she ceased to reply, and with a loss of her head disconsolately looked the other way, the poor man was disarmed. He was on the point of surrendering unconditionally, when a servant called out a message through the closed door.

Sharat got up and on opening the door learnt that the boat had been upset in the storm, and that one of the occupants, a young Brahmin boy, had succeeded in swimming ashore at their garden steps.

Kiran was at once her own sweet self and set to work to get out some dry clothes for the boy. She then warmed a cup of milk and invited him to her room.

The boy had long curly hair, big expressive eyes, and as yet no sign of hair on his face. Kiran, after trying him to drink some milk, asked him all about himself.

He told her that his name was Nilkanta, and that he belonged to a theatrical company. They were coming to play in a neighbouring villa, when the boat had sunk and foundered in the storm. He had no idea what had become of his companions. He was a good swimmer and had just managed to reach the bank.

The boy stayed with them. His narrow escape from a terrible death made Kiran take a warm interest in him. Sharat thought the boy's arrival at this moment a good thing, as his wife would now have some-

and so her, and might be persuaded to stay for some time longer. Her mother-in-law, too, was pleased at the prospect of benefitting their Brahmin guest by her kindness. And Nilkanta himself was delighted at his double escape from his master and from the other world, as well as at finding a home in this wealthy family.

But very soon Sharat and his mother changed their opinion and longed for his departure. The boy found a secret pleasure in smoking Sharat's hookahs, he would calmly go off in pouring rain with Sharat's best silk umbrellah for a stroll through the village, and make friends with all he met. Moreover, he had adopted a mongrel cur which he petted so recklessly that it came unlooked for with muddy paws, and left tokens of its visit on Sharat's spotless bed. Then he gathered about him a devoted band of boys of all sorts and sizes, and the result was that not a single mango in the neighbourhood had a chance of ripening that season.

There is no doubt that Kiran had a hand in spoiling the boy. Sharat often warned her about it, but she would not listen to him. She made a dandy of him with Sharat's cast-off clothes, and also gave him new ones. And because she felt drawn towards him, and was curious to know more about him, she was constantly calling him to her own room. After her bath and mid-day meal, Kiran would seat herself on the bedstead with her betel-leaf box by her side, and while her maid combed and dried her hair, Nilkanta would stand in front and recite pieces out of his repertory with appropriate gesture and song, his elf-locks waving wildly. Thus the

long afternoon hours passed merrily away. Kiran would often try to persuade Sharat to sit with her as one of the audience, but Sharat, who had taken a cordial dislike to the boy, refused; nor could Nilkanta play his part half so well when Sharat was there. His mother would sometimes be lured by the hope of hearing sacred names in the recitation, but the love of her mid-day sleep speedily overcame devotion, and she lay lapped in dreams.

The boy often had his ears boxed and pulled by Sharat, but as this was nothing to what he had been used to as a member of the troupe, he did not mind it in the least. In his short experience of the world he had come to the conclusion that, as the earth consisted of land and water, so human life was made up of eatings and beatings, and that the beatings largely predominated.

It was hard to tell Nilkanta's age. If it was about fourteen or fifteen, then his face was too old for his years, if seventeen or eighteen, then it was too young. He had either become a man too early or had remained a boy too long. The fact was that, joining the theatrical band when very young, he had played the parts of Radhika, Damayanti, and Sita, and a thoughtful Providence had so arranged things that he grew to the exact stature that his manager required, and then growth ceased.

Some every one saw how small Nilkanta was, and since he himself felt small, he did not receive the respect due to his years. Causes, natural and artificial, combined to make him sometimes seem immature for seventeen years, and at other times appear a mere lad of fourteen.

But a lad far too knowing even for seventeen. And as

no sign of hair appeared on his face, the confusion became greater. Either because he smoked or because he used language beyond his years, his lips puckered into lines that showed him to be old and hard, but innocence and youth shone in his large eyes. I fancy that his heart remained young, but the hot glare of publicity had been a forcing-house that ripened untimely his outward aspect.

In the quiet shelter of Sharat's house and garden at Chandernagore, Nature had leisure to work her way unimpeded. Nilkanta had lingered in a kind of unnatural youth, but now he silently and swiftly developed beyond that stage. His seventeen or eighteen years were fully revealed. No one observed the change, and its first sign was this, that when Knan treated him like a boy, he felt ashamed. When she one day gaily proposed that he should play the part of lady's companion, the idea of dressing as a woman hurt him, though he could not say why. So now, when she called for him to act over again his old characters, he disappeared.

It never occurred to Nilkanta that he was even now not much more than a lad-of-all-work in a strolling company. He even made up his mind to pick up a little education from Sharat's agent. But, because Nilkanta was the pet of his master's wife, the agent could not endure the sight of him. In addition his restless training made it impossible for him to keep his mind long engaged. Sooner or later, the alphabet seemed to dance a misty dance before his eyes. He would sit for hours with an open book on his lap, leaning against a *champak* bush beside the Ganges. Below, the waves sighed, boats floated past

above his head birds flitted and twittered restlessly. What thoughts passed through his mind as he looked down on that book he alone knew, if indeed he did know. He never advanced from one word to another, but the glorious thought, that he was actually reading a book, filled his soul with exultation. Whenever a boat went by, he lifted his book, and pretended to be reading hard, shouting at the top of his voice. But his fit of energy passed off as soon as the audience was gone.

Formerly he sang his songs automatically, but now their tunes stirred in his mind. Their words were of little import and full of trilling alliteration. Even the feeble meaning they had was beyond his comprehension; yet when he sang—

Twice born bird, ah! wherefore stirred
To wrong our royal lady?
Goose, ah, say why wilt thou slay
Her in forest shady?

he felt transported to another world and to far different folk. This familiar earth and his own poor life became music, and he was transformed. That tale of the goose and the king's daughter hung upon the mirror of his mind a picture of surpassing beauty. It is impossible to say what he imagined himself to be, but the destitute little slave of the theatrical company faded from his memory.

When at even-tide the child of want lies down, dirty and hungry, in his squalid home, and hears of prince and princess and labled gold, then in the dark hovel lighted by its dim flickering candle, his mind springs free

from its bonds of poverty and misery and walks in fresh beauty and glowing raiment, strong beyond all fear of hindrance, through that fairy realm where all is possible.

In this way also, this drudge of wandering players fashioned himself and his world anew, as he moved in spirit amid his songs. The lapping water, rustling leaves, and calling birds; the goddess who had given shelter to him, helpless and forsaken of God; her gracious, lovely face, her exquisite arms with their shining bangles, her rosy feet soft as flower-petals,—all these by some magic became one with the music of his song. When the singing ended, the mirage faded, and the Nillanta of the stage appeared again, with his wild elf-locks. Then Sharat fresh from the complaints of his neighbour, the owner of the despoiled mango-orchard, would come and box his ears and cuff him. The boy Nillanta, the leader astray of adoring youth, went forth once more, to make ever new mischief by land and water and in the branches that are above the earth.

Shortly after the advent of Nillanta, Sharat's younger brother Satish, came to spend his college vacation with them. Kanan was hugely pleased at finding fresh occupation. She and Satish were of the same age and the time passed pleasantly in games and quarrels and reconciliations and laughter and even tears. She would suddenly clasp him over the eyes from behind with vermilion-stained hands, or she would write monkey on his back, or else she would bolt the door on him from the outside amidst peals of laughter. Satish in his turn did not take things lying down. He would steal her

Kiran liked to see people eat, young and old. Ail Kanda had an insatiable capacity for eating and never refused a good thing, however frequently it might be offered. So Kiran liked to send for him to have his meals in her presence, and ply him with delicacies, happy in the bliss of seeing this Brahmin boy eat his fill. But when Satish joined them, she had much less spare time on her hands, and was seldom present to see Nilkanta's meals served. Before, her absence made no difference to the boy's appetite, and he would not rise till he had drained his cup of milk and rinsed it thoroughly with water.

But now, if Kiran was not there to ask him to try this and that, he was miserable and nothing tasted right. He would get up, without eating much, and say to the serving-maid with tears in his voice: 'I am not hungry.' He thought that the news of his repeated refusal, 'I am not hungry,' would reach Kiran; he pictured her concern, and hoped that she would send for him and press

him to eat. But nothing of the sort happened. Kiran never knew and never sent for him, and the maid finished whatever he left. He would then put out the lamp in his room, throw himself on his bed in the darkness, and bury his head in the pillow in a paroxysm of weeping. What was his grievance? Against whom? And from whom did he expect redress? At last, when no one else came, Mother Sleep soothed with her soft caresses the wounded heart of the motherless lad.

Nilkanta came to the unshakable conviction that Satish was poisoning Kiran's mind against him. If Kuan was absent-minded and had not her usual smile he would jump to the conclusion that some trick of Satish had made her angry. He took to praying to the gods, with all the fervour of his hate to make him at the next rebirth Satish and Satish him. He had an idea that a Brahmin's wrath could never be vain, and the more he tried to consume Satish with the fire of his curses, the more did his own heart burn within him. And, upstairs, he would hear Satish laughing and joking with his sister-in-law.

Nilkanta never dared to show his enmity to Satish openly. But he would contrive a hundred petty ways of causing him annoyance. When Satish went for a swim in the river and left his soap on the steps of the bathing-place, he would find on coming back for it that it had gone. Once he found his favourite striped tunic floating past him on the water, and thought it had been blown away by the wind.

One day Kuan wished to entertain Satish, so she

sent to the Nizam to receive as much, but he could not say where. In great surprise, he asked what was the matter. But he would not say when again pressed by her to repeat the fact of this, he answered, "I do not remember it, away."

At last the time came for their return. The lady was busy packing up. Satish was going. But the Nizam's messenger said a word. "Whether he was to go or not, he could not be certain."

The subject, as a matter of fact, had been hit on, who had proposed to take him with her husband and his mother and brother had so strenuously that she had let the matter couple of days before they were to start, of the boy, and with kind words advised him to his home.

He had felt neglected for so long that the kindness was too much for him. He burst. Kitan's eyes were also brimming over. She with remorse at the thought that she had cut off affection, which had to be broken.

But Satish was greatly annoyed at the blun-

has no wish to become a mouse again. And he has evidently discovered that there is nothing like a tear or two to soften your heart.'

Nilkanta hurriedly left them. He felt that he would like to be a knife to cut Satish to pieces; a needle to pierce him through and through, a fire to burn him to ashes. But Satish was not even scared. It was only his own heart that bled and bled.

Satish had brought with him from Calcutta a very fine inkstand. The inkpot was set in a mother-of-pearl boat drawn by a German-silver goose supporting a penholder. It was a great favourite of his, and he cleaned it carefully every day with an old silk handkerchief. Kiran would laugh, and tapping the silver bird's beak would say—

Twice born bird, ah, wherefore stirred
To wrong our royal lady?

and the usual war of words would break out between her and her brother-in-law.

The day before they were to start, the inkstand was missing and was to be found nowhere. Kiran smiled, and said: 'Brother-in-law, your goose has flown off to look for your Damayanti.'

But Satish was in a great rage. He was certain that Nilkanta had stolen it. —for several people said they had seen him prowling round the room the night before. He had the accused brought before him, in Kiran's presence. 'You have stolen my inkstand, you thief!' he burst out. 'Bring it back at once.' Nilkanta had always taken punishment from Sharat, deserved or undeserved, with

sent into his box as a surprise. The box itself had been her gift.

From her bunch of keys she selected one that fitted and unhesitatingly opened the box. It was so jammed up with odds and ends that the new clothes would not go in. So she thought she had better take everything out and pack the box for him. At first knives, tops, kite-flying reeds, bamboo twigs, polished shells for peeling green mangoes, bottoms of broken mimbars and such things as appeal to a boy's heart were discovered. Then there came a layer of linen clean and otherwise. And from under the linen then emerged the missing inkstand, goose and all.

Kiran, with flushed face, sat down helplessly with the inkstand in her hand, puzzled and wondering.

In the meantime, unknown to Kiran, Nikant had come into the room from behind. He had seen the whole thing and thought that Kiran had come like a thief to catch him in his thieving, and that his crime was discovered. How could he ever hope to convince her that he was not a thief, and that only revenge had prompted him to take the inkstand, which he meant to throw into the river at the first opportunity? In a weak moment he had put it in his box instead. 'I am not a thief, his heart cried out, not a thief.' Then what was he? What could he say? That he had stolen, and that he was still not a thief? He could never explain to Kiran how grievously wrong she was. And then how could he bear the thought that she had tried to spy on him?

At last, Kiran with a deep sigh explored the ink-

troupe. An example of two words, with slightly different meanings, coming from one and the same French word. The French word is 'troupe,' meaning a company. This form is used in English for a company of players or actors. But the form 'troop' is used chiefly of soldiers automatically. This is a modern English word from the Greek 'autos,' meaning self. Compare *autobiography*, *autonomy*, *autocracy*. Modern English is drawing largely from the Greek language for its new words.

alliteration. The Latin word for letter is 'littera.' From this we get many English words, e.g. *letter*, *literate*, *literal*, *literature*, *illiterate*, *obliterate*, *transliterate*, etc.

mirage. From the Latin 'mirari,' to wonder. Compare *mirror*, *miracle*, *admire*. This is one of the words in English which keeps the old French accent on the last syllable—mirage. The tendency in English is always to throw the accent back as far as possible. Many words have changed their pronunciation in the course of time. Obdurate, in Milton's time, was pronounced obdurate, but to day it is pronounced óbdu-rate. Trafalgar was pronounced Trafal-zar last century. 'Now we pronounce it Trafalgar

IX. — THE SON OF RASHMANI.

I

Kalpada's mother was Rashmani, but she had to do duty of the father as well, because when both of the parents have too motherly feelings, then it is bad for the child. Bhavani her husband was wholly incapable of doing his children under discipline. To know why he went on spoiling his son you must hear something of the former history of the family.

Bhavani was born in the famous house of Saptarishi. Her father Abhirava Chatur had a son Shvata Chatur and first wife. When he married again after her death and himself passed the marriageable age, and his new son-in-law took advantage of the weakness of his position to have a special portion of the family estate settled on his daughter. In this way he was satisfied that provisions had been made in case his daughter should become a widow. She would be independent of

